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APOLLO

1950

the Magazine of the Arts for
Connoisseurs and Collectors

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THE MAGAZINE OF THE ARTS FOR CONNOISSEURS AND COLLECTORS

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CURRENT SHOWS AND COMMENTS BY PERSPEX

ON KNOWING HOW FAR TOO FAR TO GO



"THE NIGHTMARE." By HENRY FUSELI.

From Roland, Browse and Delbanco's Galleries. PERSPEX's choice for the Picture of the Month.

THE mood of the moment in art—as, alas, in life—is violence. The critic finds himself faced all too often by walls of pictures which have the feeling of rehearsals for explosions of the various bombs which the rulers of the nations imagine necessary for solving the difficulties and differences of political power. And in the resultant stridency the still small voice of the quietist is not likely to be given much attention, despite a certain biblical wisdom on this subject.

It is probably a by-product of this contemporary passion for the passionate that has created suddenly the vogue for the art of Henry Fuseli, that Swiss-born XVIIIth century artist who is at once so like and so unlike Blake. "Damned good to steal from" he is recorded as having said of Blake; whilst Blake says of him, "Inimitable! and the effect of the whole is truly sublime"—a rare expression of admiration for a contemporary from that quarter. In truth, both Blake and Fuseli in their joint and several ways belong rather to our time than to their own, although the style of their art, the Neo-Gothic spirit struggling in the bonds of a classical body, belongs entirely to their own. I feel, however, that these two men represent the terrific piling up of the forces of good and evil which are a characteristic of our time: Ape and Essence, as

Aldous Huxley would call it. Indeed, I have just been reading one of Huxley's novels written towards the end of the war, *Time Must Have a Stop*, and there, as always in his work, the two ways of living are set in their irreconcilable divergence. On the one hand the ways of this world of the senses, lusts, passions, egoism and personal power and enjoyment; on the other the way of eternity which can only be attained by renunciation of these things. Fuseli and Blake. The two prophets understood each other, and knew that they were talking the same language though they were discussing the two contrary attitudes. It is little wonder that in our day, when the acceleration of events is precipitating the crisis, these two voices are heard as they have never been heard in the intervening nearly two hundred years. Our age is concerned with the subjective in art. Its subjects tend to be those of the inmost mind and the spirit rather than the external world. Our artists can barely deign to "come to earth" (in a literal sense) for the symbols with which they register their expressionism, surrealism, and all the other isms which go to the making of their versions of some fundamental reality. Freud has given them the key to the sub-conscious and in our uninhibited era they have explored it.

Therefore the time was ripe for Fuseli. "One of the most

unexplored regions of art are dreams," Fuseli himself said, and proceeded to explore it with the aid, it is said, of suppers of raw pork immediately before retiring! In truth he had little need to stimulate a mind overcharged with images of terror, passion, and the romantic horrific. In 1782 he exhibited in the Royal Academy the picture, "The Nightmare," which made him famous. It may have been a political allegory along with the "Witches" and the "Lady Macbeth" of about the same time which are all said to have symbolised the fear, the wickedness in high places and the prediction of disaster of the period. How Fuseli would have enjoyed himself in ours! But more than twenty years had passed since as a hot-headed left wing young cleric he had founded the Patriots' Society in his native Zurich; and although he had not changed his opinions, politics and the theories of Rousseau were not the foreground of his thought. Personally I think he had a predilection for nightmares—nightmares for nightmares' sake. Fuseli and raw pork were sufficient, without any adventitious aid from the doctrines of Diderot.

In those intervening years he had been to Rome for eight years, and there had sat at the feet of Michelangelo. There he found his style: the use of the heroic nude as a means of expression. He made himself a magnificent draughtsman, and our enthusiasm to-day is justly for that draughtsmanship. The drawings in the Arts Council Exhibition at the New Burlington Gallery and those reproduced in Professor Ganz's recently published book are an immense experience. Pen, pencil or brush is alive in his hand at the dictates of a mind always urging them to the wildest excesses of expression. This explosive, Baroque quality turned for its subjects to the strangest and most terrifying moments of romantic, classical or biblical literature, and the more sinister aspects of the life about him. "Joseph tempted by Potiphar's Wife," "Romeo and Juliet," or "A Couple Kissing": whatever ostensible subject the erotic motive has, the result is to the last degree passionate and unrestrained: "Two Cannibals in Bedlam," as the seduced hero in Huxley's novel remembered that experience in a dubious tranquility. There are strange suggestions in Fuseli, too, of sadism, fetishism, exhibitionism, and other by-paths of sex. A curious mind. He can be boring when he paints in his heavy, smooth manner giant canvases for Alderman Boydell's venture, The Shakespeare Gallery, or his own ruinous reflection of it, The Milton Gallery; but often the duller piece will be redeemed by some touch of Fuselian fantasy, as when the lovely insect-like fairy dances at the feet of Titania and Bottom.

Last year at the Roland, Browse and Delbanco Gallery there was a fascinating exhibition of Fuseli's paintings and drawings, and "The Nightmare," in a version painted in 1782, is still to be seen there. This one picture, which took the town by storm that year, and subsequently as an engraving became popular all over Europe, contains the whole quality of Fuseli: his preoccupation with the horrific, his brilliantly daring composition, the vitality of the sheer technical achievement based on a power of superb draughtsmanship, sensitive, subtle, and entirely satisfying.

Nowadays one hardly dares to use the term draughtsmanship, for one is faced by the curious paradox that in current criticism the term has come to signify exactly the opposite to its original meaning. Faced by a crude and rather brutal expressionism—Rouault, for instance—one will almost inevitably hear some rapt aesthete murmur: "What draughtsmanship!" whereas the expressionists have deliberately dispensed with precisely that quality which they regard as a surface snare and an out-moded superficiality. Picasso in his now despised Blue and Pink periods, in his Classical Outline drawings, and in his illustrations to Buffon's *Natural History*, proved himself a good (but not a supremely good) draughtsman. In that massacre of the innocents, the babies he has emptied out with the bath water, draughtsmanship went with the rest. But still we hear that rapt aesthetic murmur about every phase of his experimentalism.

I heard it again at the show of a new young painter, Rolf Durig, at the Redfern Gallery, where it was totally irrelevant despite some exciting qualities which he does possess. Durig, like Fuseli, is a Swiss; and, like all Swiss geniuses except the hoteliers and the watchmakers, he has left his native land. He has for the moment settled in France, where an exhibition last year was an outstanding success in that all the pictures sold. His other link with Fuseli is that he shares the explosive vitality of the XVIIIth century man, but, of course, he expresses it in the modernist manner of terrific colour and exuberance. His colour schemes, with their tendencies towards the most vivid orange-red and fierce greens, make one blink. His pictures too often, like those of Theodore Garman which occupied the same walls last month, explode into every

corner of the frame. He is an exciting artist; and yet more truly effective the moment he shows a little restraint, as in one harmonious green and blue picture called "Le jardinier," wherein the simplified form of the nude torso of the gardener is seen from the back as he moves through an arabesque of leaves. At present I would say that Durig is an example of the type which goes too far in untrained violence of form and colour. And—despite that sibilant "Such a draughtsman" which still echoes in my ear—not a draughtsman. Eight years in Rome learning the language of art at the feet of Michelangelo. . . . But Rolf Durig will much more likely go for eight days to the jungle and return to startle Chelsea and earn the lyric admiration of the critics with pseudo-Bantu. These dire predictions apart, Rolf Durig is a noteworthy young artist, of whom we are likely to hear more.

The problem of just how far too far to go poses itself perfectly at the Leicester Galleries where Charles McCall is having his first one-man show, with Stephen Bone and Fred Uhlman sharing the galleries.

Stephen Bone's "Urban Landscapes" are traditionalism at its best. The poetry in these studies of London, Stockholm, Dublin, Amsterdam and other cities lies in the innate sensitiveness of the artist to the spirit of place, and his ability to convey this in some way in the actual painting. As befits the son of Sir Muirhead, the solidity of the construction of the architecture is not the least asset, but it is not for that alone that one is attracted to these pictures. It is because of an elusive subjective quality. Dublin feels different from London, Stockholm from Dundee; and the artist has himself appreciated the quality of that difference and expressed it. Yet the artist has not intruded. Many would say, indeed, that he has not intruded enough; not, in this instance, gone far enough. This compares strangely with the painting, which is also often urban, of Fred Uhlman showing in the next room; for Uhlman makes everything into one of his typical pictures. With Stephen Bone you react to a picture by thinking, "That's Stockholm," not because you recognise the dip of the road down to Lake Maler, but because the essence of Stockholmness has been caught in the light, the colour, the forms. With Uhlman, on the other hand, you react by thinking, "That's Uhlman," because whether he is presenting a "Cemetery at Lancieux" or a lighthouse, "St. Paul's Cathedral" or "Fishing Village," there is the signature tune, as it were, of his typical cold colours and shapes. Doubtless he sees it that way, and doubtless I do not. I find myself murmuring with slight cynicism:

"There is some corner of a foreign field
Which will be always Uhlman."

Which means that this highly individual way of his does not "speak to my condition" as the Quakers would say. No; if I face the facts I find his actual quality of painting unattractive; his design (presumably the keynote of his work) blatant; and his colour repellent. That is the fundamental difficulty of all this highly individualised contemporary art: that unless your mood is attuned to that of the artist by the chance of temperament, you will almost certainly actively dislike the work. Sometimes it will be redeemed by sheer technical virtuosity—and sometimes not.

The work of Charles McCall, though he too has a pronounced individuality, charmed me. Was it, in his case, that he had not gone "too far"; too far, that is for my taste which does not run to extremes? He is an Impressionist concerned for the most part with figures in interiors; pleasant interiors with a genial air of comfort, of carpets and cushions and curtains upon all of which the sunlight streams through the windows and results in a blaze of colour. It tends to destroy form in the way we have grown accustomed to accept with Impressionism, but in the case of Charles McCall it is clear that this loss of objective form is not because he cannot or will not draw it. He is clearly a draughtsman in the old exact sense of the term, as an early figure subject, "Maxine," ably demonstrates, and he does not distort form for the sake of some strongly personal sense of design. Design comes from the careful arrangement of the elements in these interiors, united as they are by the effect of the prevailing light. In this carefulness he is more deliberately the artist than Vuillard, of whose work there is a faint echo, chiefly a factual one, in that the carpets and upholstery play so large a part in the colour scheme and design. But the modern tendency is towards a growing haphazardry in design as in drawing, so an artist like Charles McCall may easily be underestimated, criticised on the one side for not interfering enough with nature and on the other for interfering too much.

The Six Painters showing at Agnew's may easily suffer in the same way. Edwin la Dell, Nadia Benois, Thomas Carr, Roger de Grey, Robin Darwin, and Barry Craig, have a certain unifying



"HOUSE-WORK." By CHARLES MCCALL.
At the Leicester Galleries.

mood of quiet impressionism with Barry Craig on its left wing and Thomas Carr on its right. Nadia Benois' figure subjects, especially a group of old men sitting at a table, "The Bar at Trequanda," have a different quality which makes them stand out in this exhibition; Edwin la Dell takes the most happy risks with brilliant colour as in "The Red Table Cloth," where the blaze of light on that object is reflected on the face of the child at the table; Roger de Grey makes the suburban gardens of Newcastle-on-Tyne into pleasing harmonies of grey and green; and Robin Darwin in "Queen's Gate" achieves a London twilight lyric of outstanding beauty. On the whole "not far enough" with their other exhibits; and now and again—especially when the comparative ease of landscape is abandoned for the risks of the more elusive human, either as figure or portrait—not nearly good enough. One ambitious work was Robin Darwin's "Ice Hockey at the Empress Hall," an obvious candidate for the Gallery of British Sports and Pastimes at Hutchinson House.

One artist who steps out beyond the discreet Impressionism which is the prevailing English note (perhaps because he was born in Leipzig and is British by adoption) is Walter Nessler, who has an exhibition at Twenty Brook Street. Nessler's work is sensitive and delicate and becomes exciting when he carries on the linear pattern of his forms into a non-realistic pattern which nevertheless he does not allow to become distortion or to break down the objective vision. It is a fascinating instance of an artist's power to go beyond natural appearances without an over-emphasis which disturbs—of going farther but not too far. I enjoyed especially his studies of the Paris Bridges, especially one of the "Pont Neuf" filled with a lovely rhythmic pattern and carried out in the daintiest of colours. There is nothing strident about Walter Nessler's painting. I begin to think that a voice soft, gentle and low is an excellent thing in artists as well as, according to King Lear, in women.

That is why when I crossed Brook Street to the London Gallery and subjected myself to Cyril Hamersma who turns a match-box or a screw or a fag-end into four square feet of blazing colour; Desmond Morris whose works (*vide catalogue*) "show a steady affirmation of personality" by being detached squirts and squiggles in the Joan Miro tradition; and Joan Miro himself as unpleasantly pornographic as ever; I fled.

SHAFTS FROM APOLLO'S BOW

Overheads

AN important analytical statement and a revealing body of statistics on the vexed subject of the State as Patron of the Arts is contained in a certain *Report by the Select Committee of Estimates on the Arts Council of Great Britain* published by the Stationery Office. For my own part I usually bless the Arts Council for arranging exhibition after exhibition of good pictures, and hope that their broadly cultural influence will accustom the public to visit art galleries—their own and all others public and private.

The financial side of this report reveals that "Art" is the Cinderella of the Arts: Opera and Ballet, Music and Drama being not her ugly but her more expensive sisters. For of the more than £600,000 spent, little more than £40,000 was spent on Art. The disconcerting aspect of these figures being that over £100,000 went into those mysterious nebulae called "Overheads." Even the Select Committee of Estimates, though doubtless one of those bodies who barely blink at billions, frowned on this item in the Arts Council Budget. Mr. Wyndham Lewis, who sees all this official expenditure as money which would be better used encouraging artists in the practical way of buying their pictures, probably regards even the £40,127 as so much waste, and will be lyric with rage at the six-figure Overheads. As every business man knows, however, Overheads have an unpleasant way of soaring well out of reach: and, according to some schools of political thought, Civil Service Departments are more remarkable for a tendency *ad astra* than *per ardua*.

My own alarm at this bureaucratic business is not strictly economic, though as a taxpayer I nod heavy assent to the implied rebuke. Indeed, my frown extends to the spate of official Reports which emerge so regularly from H.M. Stationery Office; for I doubt not that even printed rebukes on Overheads carry their own Overheads, "and so *ad infinitum*," as Swift would say.

I suppose there are enthusiasts who queue up to buy these Reports and so satisfy a morbid curiosity on "the way the money goes."

A more deep-seated concern is with the tendency of any official body invested with too much power to become, in a metaphorical sense, "overhead." We do not refer to the mere physical exaltation given by those priority trips in aeroplanes which are now a recognised perquisite of official life, but to the temptations to dictatorship inherent in all positions of power. Earl Russell in his social analysis, "Power," has shown how far-reaching, how subtle, that temptation can be.

There is, for instance, the matter of the 1951 Exhibition. The Arts side of this has been placed in the hands of the Arts Council, thus moving their activities—and their finances—into something like a new dimension. In due course a notice appeared in the press stating that certain painters and sculptors have been chosen to create the pictures and sculpture which will represent Britain's art activities on this occasion. Two young artists who had not been chosen understandably raised a faint protest in the columns of *The Times* pleading for open competition. Not, poor innocents, that open competition would be synonymous with open sesame if the judges were those who had, we presume, already based a judgment on the work of known artists and come to almost inevitable conclusions, given the Arts Council predilections. However, the letter called forth an official defence of the bureaucratic *modus operandi*, and the neglected pair and their fellow artists innumerable were left with their grievance.

Not the least cause for concern is that the Arts Council, like its sister department, the British Council, speaks for only one aspect of contemporary art: the advanced wing. All of us who are concerned with art would wish this phase to be represented, even emphasised on such an occasion as the 1951 Exhibition. But not to be given monopoly. The Royal Academy, the Royal Society of British Sculptors, the Royal Society of Arts might reasonably be expected to have a word in the matter, representing as they do influential bodies of more traditional artists under Royal patronage.

As the several millions of pounds expenditure on the 1951 Exhibition will come out of the public purse there is a case for the art to be as widely representative as possible, showing the best of the traditional as well as the experimental which has the suffrage of the Arts Council. "No taxation without representation" is a motto for art government as for any other. May we look forward to some indignant artist refusing on democratic grounds to pay his quota towards those Overheads, with spirited support from the P.R.A., P.R.B.S., and others who believe that the house of Art has many mansions as well as that one in St. James's Square?

Rembrandt's "Night Watch" Interpreted as a Carnival

BY JÁNOS PLESCH

FOR nearly three hundred years Rembrandt's "Night Watch" has been an object of acrimonious dispute amongst art historians. The voluminous literature which deals with this painting shows not only a complete absence of definite conclusions but also considerable disagreements. The Rembrandt experts have either dismissed this picture in a few meaningless phrases or, if they made serious attempts at interpreting it, they had to admit in the end that they were unable to fit it into the complex of Rembrandt's works as a whole.

That the reader may be able to follow my argument more easily I shall state at the outset my final conclusion which should logically have come at the end of this article, namely that I regard the picture not as a Night Watch but as a Kermis Procession. The history of the picture is admirably described in *Oud Holland* (A. van Schendel and H. H. Mertens, Vol. LXII, 1947).

We may definitely dismiss the idea that the picture represents a night scene, because it is clearly illuminated by full daylight. The sun is in the position of early afternoon in autumn or spring and throws its beams through the archways at an angle of about 45 degrees.

This brings us to the first question. What was the occasion which brought together this miscellaneous group of men partly in martial attire? None of the figures shows any serious intention in their expression or their attitude. One gets rather the impression of a somewhat pompous and self-important gathering preparing for a party. It certainly does not appear to be an organised military assembly but rather a gathering of people who are preparing to take part in some festive procession. If indeed the picture represented some official action, such as the mounting of a guard, the heavily armed men would most probably be in some sort of uniform and drawn up in some kind of order according to their rank. Of all this there is no sign whatsoever in the picture. Since the painting was hanging until late in the XIXth century in the Guild House of the Crossbow Marksmen it may well have become a heroic symbol and may thus have acquired the title of "Watch," but I think that it is much more probable that it acquired this rather as a nickname, in a spirit of irony. It is natural that when the picture was transferred to the Rijksmuseum it carried with it the name which it had borne for a hundred years.

The picture was painted in 1642, the year in which Rembrandt was deeply stricken by his wife Saskia's death. It was ordered by a Society in which middle class men of various professions, who had acquired a certain wealth and standing, gathered together. To-day, such a club would get itself photographed, but according to the custom of their time they commissioned a collective portrait from a well-known master. These city bosses, traders, dealers and craftsmen, agreed on a price with the master before the work started, and they undertook to pay him 100 guilders for each portrait. Sixteen members subscribed 100 guilders each, making a total of 1,600 guilders. The picture in its original condition showed 26 heads and figures, of which 8 to 10 did not contribute but were a necessary complement for the composition of the painting; two of them have been trimmed.

One cannot help feeling that Rembrandt considered this wholesale commission from insignificant individuals as beneath his dignity and offensive to his artistic sense. He may well have been in two minds about painting these pompous little men in all the splendour in which they liked to see themselves. It was an undertaking which ran counter to his sense of responsibility. The question for Rembrandt was how he might fulfil this task in order to earn the quite considerable fee without prostituting his art. The proud master, who by now was at the height of his reputation, must have felt reluctant to enter into commercial relations with this society of Philistines, and one might guess that he would not have accepted the commission had he been obliged to make concessions. But the 1,600 guilders were a powerful lure, and he could not afford to refuse so lucrative a commission, neither could he afford to risk his artistic reputation. We can understand how difficult it was for Rembrandt to solve the problem of gratifying the vanity and pomposity of these wealthy patrons, not to lose the 1,600 guilders, and to maintain his artistic integrity. The solution of the problem was, as I see it, a stroke of genius worthy of the master. He decided to let the members of the Guild dress up and pose in whatever manner they chose, and let them carry the responsibility for the general appearance of the group. He then gathered

them into a festive procession, and depicted them truthfully and without flattery as that which they liked to think themselves. Thus, he had no need to lie and he was not obliged to put his heart into something which was alien to him, nor was there any need to inspire a soul into persons who had none. In fact, he compromised with himself by painting figures and not characters which, otherwise, are the most significant feature of his portrait paintings.

We know that most of the members of the Guild were dissatisfied with the painting. It is an historic fact, and indicative of the artistic understanding of these men, that the captain was so dissatisfied with his portrait that he had himself painted again by one van der Helst. The others were surely as dissatisfied as the captain with their resemblance and were therefore reluctant to pay their contributions. But that was not the end of the troubles which this picture brought to poor Rembrandt, for the painting aroused public disapproval and damaged his renown as a portrait painter, so that after its completion he received only very few new commissions. It is indeed understandable and even excusable, that the members of the Guild were displeased, but it is impossible to understand the condemning criticism with which the picture was met by the public. If we examine the whole of Rembrandt's artistic output, we do not find a single work in which he does not represent that which he saw with utter and sometimes brutal frankness. Therefore, we cannot believe that the Night Watch represents anything but what the painter saw before him. What, then, may be the reason for the general discontent amongst those concerned? My explanation is that since a masquerade distorts the natural appearance and changes the face profoundly, the persons depicted looked, in their fantastic costumes, quite different from their normal selves. Thus, what they saw in the painting bore little relation to the manner in which they were accustomed to seeing themselves and their friends, and therefore they criticised the painting. We might find a further explanation for the sitters' refusal to pay in their hurt vanity, for they probably all wanted to be equally near the front, that is, in one line, which, of course, was even in this time never done in a group portrait of disguised figures. However, irrespective of whether these speculations are right or wrong, we can be quite certain that the Night Watch is a faithful and realistic reproduction of a scene which actually took place.

What we see is an assembly of dressed-up individuals gathered in the Guild Hall, posing without any relation to each other, with clumsy gestures and ill-fitting clothes, masquerading as knight, hero or dignitary, striking attitudes in mock-heroics. Their expressions are forced and vacant, the whole scene is devoid of any style, system or order.

The picture is signified by Rembrandt himself as a joke, because right in the geometrical centre he placed a figure in the dress and make-up of a clown with an out-of-date crumpled top-hat, a red nose, an artificial moustache and the collar of a jester. We look in vain for some centre of interest or action. The costumes look as if they had been dragged from the attic or borrowed from the pawnbroker, and one can find the styles of all previous historical periods. The only concern of the master was to fit into the frame each individual portrait truthfully, and to give each one his guilders' worth. Perhaps, some got away more cheaply, because the list on the cartouche shows only 18 names. One might suppose that four members of the Guild were content with cheaper places.

Some of the subjects look quite lifeless, others are moving, some appear serious, others are joking. One of them is playing with his weapon, another is reciting, some who are bored show it in their expression, and on the far right of the picture a drummer is beating his drum with great vigour. There is no connecting thread whatsoever in the whole picture and not one of the figures shows any resoluteness. There is no gesture in the whole painting which is definite and purposeful, everything is vague. The eye wanders over the painting without finding a fixed direction and the light which falls on the group is diffuse. The only common characteristic is the general sloppiness with which everyone is handling his weapons and is posing as a model.

The general lack of connection between the various figures in the picture, the absence of any central idea or action, forces one to the conclusion that Rembrandt left it to the members of the Guild themselves to dress up and to group themselves as they liked. Thus, it was natural that the officers came to the front.

REMBRANDT'S "NIGHT WATCH" AS A CARNIVAL



None the less, one should not imagine that Rembrandt took his task lightly. On the contrary, he solved the problem which he had set himself in the manner of a genius. Every brush-stroke bears the mark of the master, his characterisation was surely truthful and no portion of the picture was neglected or executed inartistically. It was the subjects which were clumsy, badly grouped and arranged without taste, and he painted them one after the other without adding or subtracting, as they presented themselves.

It is plausible to assume that Rembrandt had quite other intentions for this painting than what he executed in the end. It must have been difficult to deal with the Guild members severally and collectively. Each one wanted something different, and the master could obtain no agreement between all the separate private wishes and his own artistic proposals. In the end, he may well have decided to let them have it their own way, and to paint them in the grouping and attire that pleased them best. The more indifferent he became towards the whole distasteful business, the more opportunity he had of getting his own back and expressing his contempt for the whole gathering. It is this type of mood which Rembrandt expressed in a most dignified manner in the *Night Watch*.

Thus, we may imagine Rembrandt setting to work with deep contempt for his subjects and great enthusiasm for his task, and he started painting the members one by one beginning with the officers. Furthest in the foreground is the small insignificant figure of the lieutenant which becomes even more insignificant by contrast with the captain at his side who is of average height. What an inspiration it was to contrast the black costume of the captain with the dazzling whiteness of the lieutenant's gold-embroidered uniform! Rembrandt, by placing these two figures in the foreground, imparts to this work a metaphysical quality, and raises it to a level which has scarcely ever been attained in any other painting. This is the clue to why the *Night Watch* always makes such a deep and lasting impression. The painting acquires its character

from this masterly trick of contrasting the black and white uniforms and simultaneously dazzling the viewer with the white golden uniform of Lieutenant van Ruytenburch. The dazzling effect of this white uniform is analogous to the trick used in the theatre, where the audience is prevented from seeing what happens in the dark background of the stage by a bright light directed across the stage towards the audience. The spectator cannot distinguish details of what is happening in the background and in a similar way this trick of dazzling has enabled Rembrandt not only to maintain his usual chiaroscuro but to keep the background in even more than usual obscurity. The presence of many indistinct faces in the background seems to support this view. Having produced this effect, Rembrandt could then concentrate on the colour and light effects. In his other portraits Rembrandt expressed the soul and character of his subjects, but here he was able to dispense with this necessity, which would have been distasteful to him as he had no sympathy with these Philistines. For the dazzled spectator it becomes immaterial whether little van Ruytenburch holds his spear in a determined or a lax manner. It is unimportant whether the frog-eyed Banning Cocq has a vacant or a pensive expression. The eye of the spectator is so blinded by the bright light and the splendour of the colours and so fascinated and satisfied that it no longer seeks any meaning or action. Furthermore, this trick made it superfluous to work out in detail the folds and texture of the costumes. If we analyse the background in greater detail the lack of expression on most of the faces becomes quite obvious, although some of them look interesting and do not lack manly beauty. However, the movements of the figures lack purpose and direction, and none of the persons in the painting appears to have any definite relation to any others. For instance, the sergeant seems to be explaining something to his neighbour, but the neighbour is not listening. The figure dressed up like a knight just above the lieutenant is holding his lance more as if he were about to tickle someone than if he had any serious intention. The helmeted figure

in the centre of the background is wearing a cuirass which must date several centuries before Rembrandt's time. Next to him is the standard-bearer carrying the banner easily in one hand, and we may conclude that the banner must have been very light, probably made of silk. This conclusion is supported by the fact that the banner transmits the light which falls on it from the far side. The standard-bearer himself is dressed magnificently in a colourful coat and sash of a style such as was customary during the 30 Years' War, or earlier. Behind the left shoulder of the standard-bearer one can see just about a quarter of a face, and I think it resembles Rembrandt himself looking on the gathering. He appears to be contemplating this theatrical and puerile masquerade with a superior smile. The hats, helmets and various pieces of armour do not correspond to Rembrandt's period but belong to the fashions of a hundred and more years earlier, as already mentioned. All the costumes seem to have been collected from anywhere and everywhere without any consistent style. They don't fit the wearers and may seem to be very stiff, as, for instance, the collar of the standard-bearer. The helmets are either too large or too small and some, like that of the figure on the extreme left, seem to be falling off. The hats suit neither the wearer nor the costume and do not fit the period. The feathers are all in the wrong places, either too low or too high, the sashes are carelessly tied. In short, the whole gathering gives the impression of being dressed-up for a single occasion such as a fancy dress procession.

As already mentioned, the scene is painted in the early afternoon either in autumn or spring. Since all the figures are very warmly dressed I would be inclined to place the picture at the time of the autumn kermis (village church fair). The fresh oak leaves in the helmet of one of the dwarfs seem to confirm this view.

One of the most important clues to the whole picture is provided by four small figures which are all very active and are running around between the legs of the main subjects. The art critics have paid little attention to these small figures and those who did discuss them have misinterpreted them. I am referring to the two small female figures in the centre of the picture which seem to form a secondary source of light; furthermore, the running figure on the extreme left and the figure behind the captain which is turning its back on the spectator and is wearing the helmet with oak leaves. All four of these figures are dwarfs. Thanks to Rembrandt's realism it is not difficult to make a definite diagnosis of the category of dwarfs to which these figures belong. The girls look old and wrinkled so that many critics did not know whether they were meant to be young girls, old women or witches. The leathery skin, vacant expression and piercing eyes, as well as the dainty body, make it appear that they belonged to the myxoedematous type of idiot dwarf. The two male figures, however, belonged to the class of chondrodystrophic dwarfs. Both are so accurately portrayed that the typical deformities of the extremities are obvious, especially the swollen knee joints and hypertrophic calves which make the whole body look grotesque and ill-proportioned. Chondrodystrophy is a disease of the glands; if the pituitary is affected, all protuberances of the body, such as chin and nose, and all extremities are abnormally large. Indeed, the figure on the far left carrying the powder horn, has an uncommonly large nose. We can therefore conclude that we have here four half-witted individuals towards whom people were lenient out of pity, and who may be expected to have made use of this leniency and the freedom which was usually accorded to them.

The reason why I have dwelt at length on these dwarf figures is that I consider them to give support to my view of this whole assembly as a carnival, for it is known that madmen and half-wits were usually admitted to riotous revelries and processions in order to add to the fun of the proceedings. In addition, these characters were very often dressed-up for such occasions. In art, dwarfs and idiots were painted by many of Rembrandt's famous predecessors and contemporaries who often incorporated them as subsidiaries in their paintings. They were regarded as caricatures of humanity and were used to symbolise a complete indifference to human affairs, and they formed a conventional ingredient of all gatherings of people. I am of the opinion that in the *Night Watch*, too, their presence can have no other interpretation. The members of the Guild seem to ignore these four figures as beneath their dignity. The dwarf behind the captain seems to be threatening one of the members of the Guild with a rifle, but he, behind and between the captain and the lieutenant, appears to brush the rifle aside, and to look down on the dwarf with an indulgent expression.

I would now like to consider the two small female figures which form the second centre of light and brilliance, the lieutenant being the first. They have mostly been interpreted as arising from the

necessity for a second source of light, and this task the frontmost of the two certainly fulfils. She has been described by the art critics as a little lady, an old woman, a witch or a young girl. Technically, Rembrandt needed her, but how else could he fit her into the style or rather lack of style of the whole composition, if not as a harmless idiot? Everything about her is unharmonious. She is wearing a white silk dress and an unrecognisable headdress and is covered with jewellery. The style of her sleeve corresponds to the fashion of about 1620-30 as one can see from the paintings of Molenaer, Honthurst, Santvoort, A.v.d. Venne. The white chicken which is hanging from the belt of this small figure is completely mysterious, and may have its origin in some old custom or some religious rite of sacrifice. Rembrandt certainly seems to have enjoyed painting this person.

Lastly, I would say a few words about the name-plate. The mercenary outlook of those who commissioned the picture would naturally insist that since they did not see any great resemblance between themselves and their portraits, there should at least be written evidence of their identity in the form of a list of names, and one cannot blame traders for this demand. Rembrandt seems to have complied with this request by adding the name-plate after the completion of the painting. This is indicated by infra-red and X-ray photographs which show the outlines of the architecture underneath the large name-plate. The artist appears to have been reluctant to fulfil the demand and placed the list of names in as inconspicuous a position as possible.

I regard the name-plate as further support for my views. The elliptical plate is crowned with a distorted face with idiotic expression which seems to be a replica of the female dwarf in the centre of the picture. Immediately below the plate is another idiotic face putting out its tongue. The arms of the upper dwarf embrace the frame of laurel leaves and seem to run out into two super-posted fantastic hands with wide-open mouths and tongues of flame. At the head of the whole is another distorted, puffed-up face of a male dwarf. I interpret this whole object as showing how disgusted Rembrandt was with the whole crowd, and I believe that it revealed his relation to the picture. For him, it was first of all a joke, then a psychological study, then an experiment in colour and lighting, and lastly, a source of money, and for all that he was ready to put up with insults, and even perhaps humiliation. His only revenge is that in a corner of the picture he puts out his tongue at the whole lot, like a naughty boy, and shows them in his own way his profound contempt.

I am convinced that this analysis contains enough material to give food for thought to others. If others agree with me I see no reason why we should not change the name of the painting to "Carnival" or "Kermis revelry in Amsterdam." If, however, somebody should object that everything which I have said has been known for a long time and that I was merely labouring the obvious, I would quote the great art historian Eugène Fromentin—this quotation will be my justification, and will show how necessary it is to clear up at last the problem of the *Night Watch*.

At the end of his essay on the *Night Watch*, Fromentin writes: "How was it that an artist of such stature could miss his way so far that he did not say what he had been asked to say but, on the contrary, said exactly those things which he was not asked? Why is it that he who could be so profound and lucid when necessary, was here neither profound nor lucid? I ask, has he not shown better draughtsmanship and better painted pictures in his way; has he not, as a portrait painter, made portraits which were a hundred times better? Does this painting give us an approximately complete idea of the powers of this most inventive of geniuses, when he is working in piece as he likes? And finally I ask, where is the content of ideas which is always so striking in his work, as for instance, the *Vision of Dr. Faust* in its radiant splendour? Where is all this wealth of ideas, and if there were no ideas to be expressed, why all this splendour?"

I suggest that all these questions can be answered to the satisfaction of all with the one word—*Carnival*.

If a discussion of these matters should arise, it may deal with the essentials and not with irrelevant side-issues. Thus, my main points are: that the picture does not show a night scene but an action taking place in the day-time. It is not a military gathering but a convivial re-union of a marksmen's guild, and the action depicted does not represent a serious, much less a military, occasion. The persons represented are masquerading and striking attitudes in a pompous and more or less dignified manner. There are in the painting two pairs of idiot dwarfs of which the females are myxoedematous, the males osteochondritic pituitary dwarfs. Finally, the large name-plate was added later, but by the master, whereas the writing on it was added by a strange hand.

GERMAN PORCELAIN FIGURES IN THE CECIL HIGGINS MUSEUM, BEDFORD

BY M. A. PALMER

IT is not possible in an article of this nature to go into any detailed consideration of dating and modelling, nor, I think, is it desirable. In the first place, the relevant German authorities are comparatively scarce and inaccessible, and attribution to a particular modeller and anything more than approximate dating is in many cases not possible, even if one has read all the standard German books, which I certainly cannot claim to have done. Further, this kind of thing makes heavy reading, and I cannot help feeling that, well known as the name, at any rate, of Dresden is, there are a great many people with some interest in china, who have barely heard of Höchst, for instance, to say nothing of Ansbach. I hope, however, that the excellence of some of the figures illustrated will be so evident as to remind those who are already familiar with Chelsea, Bow, and Derby, of the high achievement of the great German factories of Höchst, Nymphenburg, Frankenthal, and so on.

I make no excuse at this point for noting that almost all the major German factories with the exception of Meissen and Vienna began making porcelain in the decade 1750-60, that is, after Meissen had been going for nearly half a century; and that they had nearly all produced their best work by about 1770, or soon after. They were roughly contemporary, therefore, with the best English work, with which they inevitably invite comparison. Can there be any other art which flowered so briefly and so brilliantly?

The most important group of figures in the Cecil Higgins Collection is that of Höchst, which was also the earliest founded of the factories mentioned in this article (1746—though porcelain was not made till 1750). The Drummer (Fig. I) is a very early figure, and is almost identical with a smaller and rather earlier Meissen figure by Kaendler, also in the collection, from which it was probably derived. They are both based on a "Provençal" in Bouchardon's "Paris Cries," though anything less French than the Höchst version it is difficult to imagine. There is a stiff dignity about it, partly owing, I suspect, to its size, which is impressive, and its restrained colouring, with black and a rather dull pale blue predominating. In spite of its somewhat wooden stance, and disproportionately large feet, there seems to me something rather attractive about this bluntly-presented figure. Perhaps the attraction lies in a feeling of strength. I find, by careful comparison with the photograph (pl. 2, No. 10) in Kurt Röder's standard work on Höchst (*Das Höchst Porzellan*: Mainz, 1930), that this is, in fact, the actual figure which he illustrates; the presence of a large fire-crack is conclusive. The incised tulip mark appears to be unique, and the significance of the "I.H." very uncertain, and at the same time quite important, since one of the reasons for ascribing this figure to Höchst is the similarity of this inscription to others fairly common on Höchst porcelain, consisting of "H" or another single letter in combination with "1," "2," "3," etc. One such is in the Cecil Higgins Collection, and is a very early figure of Narcissin from the Italian Comedy, bearing the inscription "2H," with the "2" impressed, and the "H" incised. A similar figure in the Schlossmuseum, Berlin,



Fig. I. Höchst. A Drummer.
Height: 11½ in. Mark: A tulip and IH incised on base. No. 650.



Fig. II. Höchst. Brigatellin and Skaramuz.
Ht.: 7½ in. and 8½ in. Mark (on Skaramuz): IG impressed and script F(?) incised beneath base. Brigatellin unmarked. Nos. 654 & 654A.

illustrated by Röder (pl. 3, No. 17) bears also the initials "A.L." of the painter Adam Ludwig, in addition to the "2H" as above. It would seem as if the "I" should be read as a figure, therefore.

This Narcissin is clothed in black, with a yellow feather in his hat, and yellow lining to his cloak, and stands on a low mound base with three slight moulded blossoms in pale colours. Very similar in style and treatment, but with much more life, are two further Italian Comedy figures of Brigatellin and Skaramuz (Fig. II) on pedestal bases. Here again the colouring is sober and very effective. Both figures are dressed in black with touches of orange and blue. The white pedestals are outlined in blue. These figures, too, are quite early, and have been attributed to Simon Feilner on the grounds of resemblance to figures subsequently executed by him at Fürstenberg. Hannover gives a very literal interpretation of the adjective "wooden" which he applies to this class of figure, by suggesting that they were influenced by the work of the contemporary Munich woodcarver Simon Troger. However this may be, I find this pair pleasing in pose and proportion, and their artistic integrity beyond question. There would seem to be little question, too, particularly in the figure of Skaramuz, of the technical skill of the factory at this time.

Another Höchst piece in the collection is also illustrated in Röder: the Arbour Group (Fig. III); it is pl. 22, No. 139 in his book, and numerous small points of similarity (flaws and so on) show it to be once again the actual figure in Röder's photograph. This is pure Rococo, but although this example is given by Röder as of about 1770, he says the model dates from about 1755, very little after the Drummer. The colours, however, are very different from those on any of the Höchst figures so far considered, consisting of pale purple, blue and green, with gilding on the edges of the rococo scrolling and the borders of the man's coat. The advance in technical accomplishment is noteworthy, and an elegance is present in pose and gesture which was hitherto lacking. Some attempt



Fig. III.
Höchst.
Arbour
Group.
Ht.: 11 in.
Mark: A
wheel in
blue beneath
base.
No. 656.



Fig. V.
Nymphen-
burg.
Lady and
Gallant.
By Bustelli.
Ht.: 8½ in.
Mark:
Impressed
shield on
rock by
Gallant's
left foot.
No. 679.

has been made, too, to indicate facial expression, although this is perhaps the least successful aspect of this type of group. As a decorative ensemble, though, there can be no doubt of its success, and it is only when we compare it with the work of the great Rococo artists that we feel any sense of inferiority.

Before leaving Höchst one or two other examples in the collection should be mentioned: the small group of a seated Lady with her Tailor, in front of a Rococo-scrrolled arbour, of about 1765 (cf. Röder, pl. 33A, No. 186); an early group of a Lady and a Gallant (cf. Röder, pl. 25, No. 5); and a much later figure of a girl, almost certainly by J. P. Melchior.

Mention of the very greatest of porcelain modellers brings us to Nymphenburg and the work of the Swiss-born Franz Anton Bustelli, who worked there from 1754 to 1763. A reminder that Nymphenburg is in South Germany, near Munich, will not be out of place here. Once again, too, there is a connection with wood-carving, for Bustelli's style may have been influenced by the Bavarian wood-sculptor, Franz Ignaz Gunther. Bustelli's work, however, stands alone in the history of porcelain modelling. Comparison with Kaendler of Meissen is inevitable but almost impossible, for it would consist almost entirely of contrasts. Kaendler's influence

was far-reaching and lasting; Bustelli's genius produced the ultimate brilliance of a style which was out of date within a decade of his death in 1763. Kaendler's bias was towards realism, with a strong satirical vein; his dramatic world was that of the straight play, brilliant in invention, "good theatre," and generally down-to-earth, albeit a most pleasantly transformed earth. Bustelli's world was rather that of the modern ballet and mime—I have in mind such a performance as Jean-Louis Barrault's near the beginning of the film, "Les Enfants du Paradis." It is, I think, not without significance that Bustelli's work should immediately evoke a modern comparison, for some of his figures are indeed startlingly modern in style. His method of treatment is based on a drastic simplification of modelling: curved surfaces are flattened into planes, and edges straightened to produce sharp lines and angles, particularly in his single figures, which are perhaps the most attractive to modern eyes. Such a tendency is evident in the figure of a girl known as "Taubling Gretel," in the Cecil Higgins Collection. This is white, and prompts one to realise how little colour matters in Bustelli's case, and how much in Kaendler's. Bustelli is, in this sense, far more truly sculptural (I would hasten to add that by this I intend to imply no comparison of relative merits, but only a difference of style). A link with Meissen occurs again in the white squatting figure of a Chinaman, reminding us of the early Meissen "pagodas." The Meissen figure is rounded; Bustelli has

simplified, straightened and sharpened his figure to emphasise strongly its pyramidal shape.

Bustelli is an extremist in style, for in his larger groups he has taken the scrolling asymmetries of Rococo, and has pushed them to their most fanciful and fantastic limits, always with an innate feeling for the capabilities of the style, and with the feeling that his material is ideally suited, as in fact it is, for these daring experiments in form. His is a



Fig. IV. Nymphenburg. The
Four Seasons. By Bustelli.
Hts.: 5½ in. (except Winter: 5¼
in.). Mark: Impressed shield
on pedestal. Nos. 681 & 681A-C.

GERMAN PORCELAIN FIGURES IN THE CECIL HIGGINS MUSEUM



Fig. VI. Ludwigsburg. Diana and Nymphs.
Height: 13½ in. Mark: Crossed C's below crown in blue beneath base. No. 666.

virtuoso performance that does more than succeed and even astonish: it is the purest embodiment of the Rococo style, surpassing even the sculpture of the South German churches in the airiness and lightness made possible by the fragile medium of porcelain. The Cecil Higgins Collection is lucky in possessing a version of the well-known "Sleeper Awakened," which is possibly the perfect answer to anybody who asks "What is Rococo?" This group is indeed more typical of pure Rococo than his more imaginative creations, in which figures and background are together caught up in a single composition of breath-taking curves.

One of the most distinctive characteristics of Bustelli's work is



Fig. VIII. Fulda. Boy and Girl.
Heights: (Boy) 7½ in. (Girl) 7½ in. Mark on both: A cross in blue beneath base. Nos. 637 & 637A.



Fig. VII. (Top) Ansbach. Lady with a Fan.
Height: 5½ in. No. 528.
Dancing Girl. Height: 6 in. No. 529. Both unmarked.
(Bottom) Ludwigsburg. Dancers. Height: 5½ in.
Mark on both: Crossed C's below crown in blue on base.
Nos. 668 & 668A.

the liveliness of facial expression on his figures, seen for example in the "Taubling Gretel." This is always in harmony with the sentiment expressed in the gestures of the single figure, or in the poses of his groups. It is the making of some of his small busts, such as, for example, "The Four Seasons" (Fig. IV). There is not very much scope for originality or inventiveness in such a subject, but we have only to think of the Bow version, for instance (also in the Cecil Higgins Collection), to realise what Bustelli has achieved here.

While the white group of a Lady and Gallant (Fig. V) by Bustelli in the Cecil Higgins Collection does not show the more extreme tendencies of his style, it does nevertheless include a number of characteristic features, such as the simplified planes of the man's coat and the animated facial expressions, while the poses of the figures seem to form a spontaneously-conceived design. It is interesting to compare it with the other white group in the collection, of Diana and Nymphs, made at Ludwigsburg (Fig. VI). This is a much more complex design, with a feeling of having been more consciously thought out, but nevertheless quite successful sculpturally. The sentiment, however, is at the opposite pole from Bustelli's and is a good example of the "Rococo-Classical" style of the 1760's. That it is contemporary with Bustelli's work is an indication of the caution needed in any generalisations on style, and the impossibility of classi-

lying styles in water-tight chronological compartments.

Much more attractive than this group are the two figures of Dancers also made at Ludwigsburg, of about 1770 (Fig. VII: bottom). They have a delicacy of line, a courtly elegance which make them undoubtedly the most charming figures in the collection. They are typically Rococo in their pale colouring and gilt scrolled bases, while their graceful gestures portray a sentiment which quite disarms criticism. By contrast the two Ansbach figures (Fig. VII: top) are naïve and doll-like, but nevertheless pleasing by their very simplicity. The Lady with the Fan has the half-closed eyes, painted in brownish-red, peculiar to Ansbach. But before leaving Ludwigsburg we must note a figure of a Print-Seller, of about 1770, signed on three of his prints "Chr. F. Wirth. Inv. et fec. Ludwigsburg."

Another attractive pair of figures are the Boy and Girl as Gardeners, made at Fulda about 1770 (Fig. VIII), typical of the factory in their perfect finish and in their distinctive mauve and purple colouring. The painting of the hem of the girl's skirt, and of the delicate rococo-scrolls, partially gilt, on the boy's coat is particularly fine.

Attention to detail without being fussy is characteristic of the two seated figures of a Merchant and his Wife, after J. F. Lück, made at Frankenthal (Fig. IX). They are writing up their accounts, and the date 1764 appears on the note which the man is copying. There is a Meissen model of the lady, adapted from Chardin's painting "L'Econome," engraved by Le Bas in 1754 (Honey: *Dresden China*, pl. 51). But Frankenthal had amongst its master-modellers Konrad Linck, an apostle of neo-classicism, who produced figures and groups at this factory from 1762-66, and occasionally later. The final illustration (Fig. X) is a fine example of his work, and makes it evident that he must be thought of amongst the great porcelain modellers. The composition is exceedingly complex and truly three-dimensional—so much so that it is very difficult to display properly, as it needs to be viewed from all sides to get the full effect of the design. The masterly plastic treatment of the base as part of the design reminds us of Bustelli, but the sentiment is very far removed from his, and the modelling is soft, but never flabby.

Amongst the pieces from other German factories are three from Berlin: a youth with his hand of a tree in his hand, probably modelled by F. E. Meyer, and a pair of small white figures of a boy and a girl, each holding a birdcage. There is also a Vienna group of a mother sending her son to school and two small Fürstenberg figures of a boy as a blacksmith, and a man with a basket of eggs. Also from Fürstenberg is a model of a dove-cote, while from Kelsterbach there is a very fine crouching figure of a Pierrot with his hat in his hand, and a Dancing Girl on a grassy-mound base, rather similar to the kind of figure made by J. P. Melchior, at the nearby factory of Höchst. An interesting bird-nesting group comes from Volkstedt, and there are several Kloster-Veilsdorf figures, including a girl representing Summer, a tall Pierrot in a black coat, a small Harlequin holding a letter, and an attractive Lady in a Domino. Lastly, there are two figures from factories dealt with above, which are worth noting: a Frankenthal figure of a Woodcutter by J. A. Hannong, and another Fulda figure, of a girl with a basket of eggs on her back.

Enough is to be seen in the Cecil Higgins Collection of German figures to indicate the range and quality of the German achievement in this field, and a study of these figures should do much to enable us to see the English figures in correct

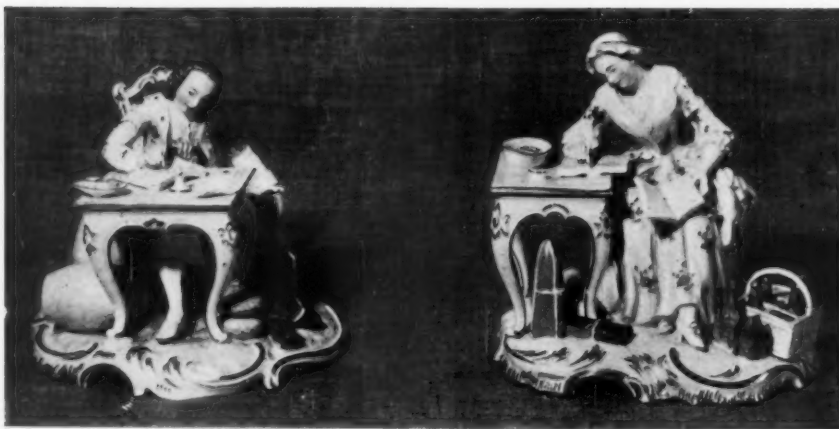


Fig. IX. Frankenthal. Merchant and his Wife. Heights: (Merchant) 5½ in. (Wife) 6½ in. Marks: Monogram CT below crown in blue beneath base of both; (Merchant) N2S(?) incised under the glaze beneath base. (Wife) H(?) in purple enamel beneath base. Nos. 634 & 634A.

perspective. It should be evident that, with the sole exception of Chelsea, and sometimes, by its very naïveté, early Bow, there are few English figures which can be seriously considered side by side with those of the German factories, and none at all to compare with the greatest German masterpieces.

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Readers who may wish to make a closer acquaintance of the Cecil Higgins Collection will like to know that it can be seen at the Cecil Higgins Museum at Castle Close, Bedford, throughout the year, on Sundays between 2.30 and 5 as well as on weekdays from 10 until 6.

Reviews by Mr. M. A. Palmer will be resumed in later issues of APOLLO and will include the Glass in the Collection.



Fig. X. Frankenthal. Virgins adorning Cupids. Height: 8½ in. Mark: Monogram CT below crown above 74(?) in blue beneath base. No. 633.



Reconstruction of a Japanese warrior wearing plate helmet and cuirass. Circa A.D. 700. After Bashford Dean.

A PLEA FOR JAPANESE ARMOUR

BY H. RUSSELL ROBINSON

I HAVE recently heard that fifty Japanese armours are to perish in a spectacular holocaust for the sake of a few minutes' cinema entertainment.

This tragedy will worry few of those who go to see the spectacle, but I feel that it is high time that the destruction of the battle harness of the Samurai of Old Japan came to an end.

Few antiquities of any nation have suffered the indignities which Japanese armour has received, and few students of art have ever given it more than a passing glance.

What, you will ask, is the reason for this? I would answer that perhaps it is the lack of literature written on the subject in our language. Hundreds of books were published in Japan when armour was actually in use for the guidance of Samurai and students of military history,

but only one of these, an inferior work, has been translated and published in this country.¹ Another translation of a very scholarly work, edited by the late Mr. A. J. Koop, B.A.,² lies in manuscript form awaiting the day when public demand makes it a worth-while proposition to a publisher.

There is one more reason I would put forward which I think has also brought Japanese armour into the lumber room and to worse degradation and insult. When Japan, in her frantic attempts to catch up with the West, flooded the world markets with cheap and shoddy trinkets, a slur was cast on all objects of Japanese origin, old or new.

The novelty of things brought from the feudal Empire of the Rising Sun during the second half of the last century has passed away and only a small percentage of collectors now find pleasure in Japanese swords, prints and ivories. The horrors of the recent conflict with Japan have also done a lot to kill the liking for the work of that country, although their swords have received a well-deserved return into the limelight, due to the vast numbers of them brought back as trophies of war by our victorious forces. But once in the shadows the armour has remained there. Some were perhaps brought into the light to perish on bonfires on V-J night, but the majority pass further into the darkness of an uninterested world.

Any one of these despised armours will repay careful examination and leave one wondering why so much patience and care was given to the making of a war harness which was to receive the onslaught of the razor-edged swords and spears of the Japanese of old. Even the cheapest of armours used by the common soldiery and *chugen* (Samurais' servants) show a superb finish, although devoid of the splendid metal fittings and choice brocades of the armours worn by men of higher rank.

To the uninitiated the beauty of Japanese armour may not immediately be apparent. It is only after examining and handling the various pieces that its full perfection can be appreciated.

I have heard it remarked by many people that the Japanese armours in this country are modern and only for parade. This is true up to a point, but not entirely so. The great majority of these



The finest specimen of an "ancient" Ō-yoroi now in existence. XIVth century. Kosuga Temple, Nara. After Bashford Dean.

armours and pieces of armour were made for Samurai and other attendants in the XVIIIth and early XIXth centuries, but often contain pieces such as helmet bowls (*hachi*) and masks (*menpo*) of XVIth and XVIIth century make. Many of them bear signatures of some of Japan's greatest armourers such as the Miöchin, Saotome and Hineno.

The general rule is, the better the quality of the old piece the finer the armour that it has been remounted with. Not all armours, however, are composed of old and new pieces. Large numbers of them are the complete work of XVIIIth and XIXth century craftsmen equal in every respect to earlier ones of the days of incessant warfare and strife.

Japanese armours are not pageant costumes. The bright coloured silk braid (*odoshi*) used for the fastening of the many lames together, the gorgeous fabrics for the mail-covered sleeves (*kote*), and the gilded metal fittings of the main plates are only the Japanese equivalent of the bright trappings and heraldic display of Europe. The grotesque masks with their long mustachios, the red lacquer lining the underside of the helmet peak to cast a reflection on the wearer's countenance, and the crests of many varied forms were to make the warrior more terrifying as he charged his enemy.

Although very rich colours of *odoshi* were reserved for high officials and princes, the shade used was more often than not regulated by the effect of the dye on the silk. A wealthy man could afford to have his armour laced with flame red (*hi-odoshi*) which had a very short life compared with the indigo (*kon-odoshi*), the colour used for nine out of ten armours. The red dye rotted the silk, giving it only a few years of life, so that armours laced with it required frequent renewals, while armours hundreds of years old laced with indigo are as strong to-day as when they were first made.

APOLLO



Omodaka-odoshi (Water plantain), O-yoroi (Great Harness) of XIVth century type but made in the early XIXth century. It bears the crest of Matsumaye Lords of Yezo. Victoria and Albert Museum.

Pieces of armour bearing the signature of one of the long line of the Miöchin family (A.D. 75-1940) are amongst some of the finest products of Japan, regardless of the period to which they may belong. The precision displayed in the fitting together of as many as 120 gores forming a helmet bowl is outstanding. The crisp finish of the plates and their riveting together is also something to marvel at.

Even on retainers' armours, where metal plates are used they are specially constructed. Each armour plate was composed of an iron plate faced with a steel one. They were separately forged and reforged under heat with wet hammers and when both had reached the right degree of hardness were hammer-welded together.

Armourers' signatures are usually to be found on the inside of helmet bowls, on the front or back central gore, or on both; in the case of the Hineno school on the underside of the helmet peak. Masks (*menpo*) are signed on the ear pieces or on the underside of the chin. Other places to look for signatures are on the large plates of the sleeves (*kote*) and the greaves (*suneate*).

Signatures are not found before the late XVth century and are first written in lacquer on the underside of the neck guard (*shikoro*). These are not to be confused with the XVIIIth century experts' attributions on early unsigned pieces which are also written in lacquer. Less common are signatures down the centre of the inside of the breast or backplate of a cuirass (*dō*).

Armourers' signatures take several forms; sometimes only the family name and personal name, sometimes only the art name. Others may begin with the family name followed by the art name and then the personal name and date of manufacture. Miöchin helmets are often signed

(Right) Back of Dō-maru showing the age-maki bows and the method of fastening the cords from the sode (shoulder guards).

Victoria and Albert Museum.



Unohana-odoshi (white laced) Dō-maru (scale cuirass without hinges, fastening on the right side) of a Daimiō of Nambu. The greaves signed Harumitsu. Late XVIIIth century. Victoria and Albert Museum.



with, firstly, the place of residence, then the date, followed by the full name and the character *saku* (made by).

The parts of a Japanese armour so often said to be "papier mâché" are really of leather. Whether the lames were built up of scales (*zane*) or of one piece of leather, the hide was carefully selected and prepared before being cut to the desired shape. The best armours had their leather parts made from the hides of Chinese cattle slaughtered in winter when the animals were in good condition and skins contained less salt. The hides were hammered until the outer skin and hair came away and then stretched in frames to dry for many weeks. When dry the leather was almost transparent. The clearer the hide the better quality it was considered.

The long history of Japanese armour is told by the numerous examples found in the burial mounds of the first centuries A.D. up to about 700 which are now preserved in museums of Tokyo and New York, and the clay figures of warriors (*haniwa*) found with them. These excavated armours are of a very advanced type made up of iron plates riveted together or laced with leather thongs.

They consist mainly of helmets of horizontal plates (instead of vertical gores as in later examples), with a laminated neck guard and sometimes a flat peak, and a cuirass also of horizontal plates encircling three-quarters of the body,

A PLEA FOR JAPANESE ARMOUR



(Left)
Armour mounted and decorated for the Lord Akita of Mihara in Mutsu Province by Haruta Tamba. XVIIIth century. The helmet bowl by Miōchin Munesuke. Late XIIth century. Victoria and Albert Museum.



(Right)
Leather-covered armour (Kawadzutsumi yoroi) of a retainer of the Itō family of Okada. Early XIXth century. Armouries of the Tower of London.

with a separate section for the right half and front to admit the body into this rigid defence.

The story is continued with fragments and many complete armours of the XIth to XVth centuries preserved in the *kura* (fireproof store houses) of Japan's temples. Ancient temple records tell us that these were presented by the original owners in gratitude to the gods for victory and success in their undertakings. In some cases where temple records have been lost or destroyed, false attributions have been made, but fortunately this is rare and on the whole the dates and associations can be relied upon. The armours which are the subject of this article carry on the story from the end of the XVth century.

One very interesting feature which would appear to the layman a useless decoration on Japanese armours is the *age-maki* bow on the back of the helmet and cuirass. These served the purpose of weighing down the rings to which they were attached to prevent them from rattling. The rings served for the attachment of helmet badges (*kasi-jirushi*) in the form of flags and, in the case of the backplate, for cords which prevented the shoulder guards (*sode*) from falling forwards when the wearer bent down.

The explanation of the numerous features in these armours would require a book on their own. I hope, however, that the few points I have raised will be sufficient to make it clear that the fittings that seem so unnecessary to a European all have a very definite utilitarian function.

I also hope that this short article may serve to convince at least a few art-lovers that the armour of Japan has as much history

behind it as our own. And I would beg anyone who possesses one of them and is about to dispose of it to look again at its lacquered or russeted plates and silk *odoshi* braid and dwell upon this creation of a proud armourer that became the pride of some forgotten and long-dead Samurai who arrogantly rode or marched in the train of a great Daimiō to visit the court of the Shogun (the Earthly Ruler) of the great Tokugawa line.

¹ *Tanki Yoriaku*, by Murai Masahiro. Trans. Jap. Soc. March, 1913.

² *Chuko Kachu Seisakuben*, by Sakakibara Kozan. Published 1800.

SOME WORKS OF REFERENCE

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Some Specialised Chairs of the XVIIIth Century

BY JOHN ELTON

THE variety of "specialised" chairs dating from the second part of the XVIIIth century is a tribute to the inexhaustible invention of English chair-makers. During the early Georgian period, specialisation had not gone far, and the only real experimental type is a wide-seated armchair serving as a writing chair.

Akin to the writing chair is the wide-seated "roundabout" or corner chair, on which the occupant could turn and shift his position. These chairs exist to-day in large numbers and in varied qualities, and are recorded in American inventories under the following names: round chair, three-cornered chair, half-round chair and "roundabout." From existing English examples, this type does not appear to be earlier than the last years of George I's reign. The earlier chairs have cabriole legs finishing in pad feet and solid vase or baluster-shaped splats; but in the middle Georgian period, some fine specimens were made with pierced splats and legs finishing in claw and ball feet. Provincial chair-makers made this type in oak, elm, ash, as well as in the more fashionable walnut and mahogany, and showed a preference for the straight leg. The two-tiered roundabouts (known in this country as "barbers' chairs") cannot from their quality and number have served exclusively for barbers' use; and a few examples exist, fitted with candle-branches and an adjustable desk, which indicate that they were reading chairs. In the example (Fig. I) the three splats are carved in low relief, as is usual in these chairs where the sitter shifts his position. Three of the four legs finish in pad feet, but the more prominent centre leg is carved on the knee and finishes in a claw and ball. The chair (Fig. II) has some affinity with the Windsor type; the legs are tapered upwards towards the seat and are connected by stretchers. There is little to indicate the date of this piece but the splat, which is vertically pierced.

The conversation chair, a concession to the informal manners of the Regency, a form which enabled the sitter to face the back, his coat-tails hanging over the front, is figured in Sheraton's *Drawing Book* (1791-94). In common with the reading chair, the conversation chair has a back tapered to a narrow waist, and a flat top rail in which an adjustable flap and candle-branches were housed. According to Sheraton, these chairs were "intended to make the exercise of reading easy," and were used both in the library and drawing-room!

An armchair which was much in favour for its lightness and mobility was the caned and upholstered bergère.

An armchair illustrated in the *Cabinet Dictionary* (1803) which is described as "stuffed all over except the legs," has a slide-out frame in the front, to support "a temporary resting place for one that is fatigued," and when made without this foot-rest, the seat was made a few inches longer. In another design a large hinged foot-rest is shown in a chair serving for "a bed occasionally and nearly the same purpose as a hunting chair."

The tub-shaped caned chair (Fig. III) is one of the many light and comfortable pieces designed in the first years of the XIXth century.



Fig. I. Double-tiered "Roundabout" chair. Mid-Georgian period.



Fig. II (left). Writing chair.



Fig. III (right). Mahogany tub-chair. Early XIXth century.

Small XVIIIth Century Furniture for the Small Home

BY JACK GILBEY

AT a time when everyone is clamouring for the smallest possible house or flat, it is not surprising that there should be a shortage of little pieces of furniture. This applies to modern as well as antique furniture, although it is only with the latter that this article is concerned.

In a search for a bookcase, the height of which had to be limited to 6 feet on account of the lowness of the ceiling, I found a remarkable number of lovely bookcases, which were in every way desirable and satisfactory even as regards price, but which failed in the only point that mattered in that they were between 7 and 8 feet in height.

It was then I did a thing which perhaps a good many amateurs have done before me. Without any knowledge I bought a bookcase that I thought was old and happened to be exactly the right height, and duly filled it with books. When I was told it was not right I took a dislike to it, but it was over a year before I could dispose of it and the transaction showed a heavy loss. Only the fact that it was small made it in any way desirable. The sympathetic dealer who sold it for me said he had never seen such a piece of furniture; it was wrong everywhere, but fortunately for me the new purchaser was prepared to buy it with all its faults. However, I had learnt the salutary lesson that one must never be in a hurry when buying old furniture and that in case of doubt it was well to seek expert advice. Another point to remember is that a piece of furniture, however correct and beautiful in design, will not look its best unless it is placed in a suitable position. One should have that position in mind when looking at a piece of furniture that one contemplates buying. Eventually I found what I had been looking for, and the illustration No. IV shows an attractive and useful Sheraton secretaire bookcase, c. 1780, 6 feet in height. The top half is 2 ft. 6 in. in breadth; the lower half, which contains the secretaire, is 2 ft. 7½ in., the remaining three drawers being ordinary drawers.

"Don't buy walnut furniture," someone had once told me, "you will have trouble with it." For that reason I had kept off walnut and concentrated on mahogany, until one day I happened to see the little Queen Anne knee-hole desk, the subject of illustration No. I. There are some things which sometimes one instinctively feels one must possess. As I looked at this little desk I could see nothing wrong with walnut wood; in fact it seemed to have much to commend it, a lovely mellow colour and a fascinating curly grain, the whole piece, considering its age, being in

good condition and showing that it had been well cared for. Like the bookcase in illustration IV, it is surprising what small space our ancestors required on which to write; with only 2 ft. 7 in. available they must have been very cramped, and the limited knee space does not make for comfort. But though both are small pieces of furniture the drawer space in each case is particularly commodious.

Two little Chippendale mahogany pieces are featured next, both c. 1760, and perhaps rather more ornamental than useful. Illustration No. II is a picquet table. This when opened makes a



Fig. I. Queen Anne Kneehole Desk, circa 1712.
2 ft. 7 in. available space.



Fig. II.
Mahogany
Chippendale
Picquet
Table,
c. 1760.
2 ft. 6 in.
dia. when
opened.



Fig. III.
Mahogany
Chippendale
Envelope
Table,
c. 1760.
Triangle
sides when
folded:
base 2 ft.,
other sides
1 ft. 3 in.
each.



Fig. IV. Mahogany Sheraton Secrétaire Bookcase, circa 1780. Height 6 ft., breadth: lower part 2 ft. 7½ in., top half 2 ft. 6 in.

circular table with a diameter of 2 ft. 6 in., but it is as a side table against a wall with one of the flaps raised that it looks more attractive. The faded colour and the grain are pleasing features.

I don't know when envelope tables first came into being, or exactly what purpose they served. As will be seen from illustration III, the piece is very small, the top surface when folded featuring a triangle whose longest side measures 2 ft., the other two sides measuring 1 ft. 3 in. respectively. The flap lifts, disclosing a small receptacle which could hold correspondence, hence possibly the reason for its name. The ogee corners give an added attraction to this purely ornamental piece.



Fig. VI. Mahogany Library Table, circa 1790. Height 2 ft. 4 in., width 2 ft. 10 in., depth 2 ft. 6 in.



Fig. V. Mahogany Sheraton Side Table, circa 1780. Height 2 ft. 6½ in., width 4 ft., 2 ft. deep at broadest part.

Beautiful workmanship and design are featured in illustration V which shows a bow-fronted Sheraton side table, c. 1780. It stands 2 ft. 6½ in. in height, with a width of 4 ft. and is 2 ft. deep at its broadest part. Of lovely faded mahogany, it has double drawers at each side instead of the usual deep drawers; the handles are original. Probably it was intended as a lady's dressing table or as a writing table, for which it would seem better fitted than for use as a side table in the dining room.

The chief feature that commends the Sheraton library table, illustration VI, is its small size. It measures 2 ft. 4 in. in height, 2 ft. 10 in. wide and 2 ft. 6 in. deep. It has one small drawer at each side, the four rounded ones at each corner being dummies. The date of this piece is c. 1790.

The century to which these pieces belong is notable for the production of furniture of the highest quality and of the finest workmanship. Such furniture is a pleasure to live with and to have in constant use. I have no time for the owner who says, "Don't sit on that chair," or "Mind how you use that table." Furniture as frail and as useless as that is better in a museum where it is only to be looked at. Half the joy of lovely things around one is to make use of them, and furniture is all the better for being used if it receives reasonable care. One very soon learns how to move furniture without damaging it. Like everything else there is a right way and a wrong way to do this, and the right way takes no longer. It is the pieces without castors that suffer most, as the legs are easily injured and the tops of tables can be strained by not being lifted from underneath. Daily dusting is essential and if done regularly does not take much time. In addition, polishing with a velvet cloth is necessary now and again. Sometimes a little more than this may be required.

To revive old furniture one may use lukewarm water with a few drops of paraffin in it. This will remove all the dirt and grease, but will not affect the patina, which is a kind of skin on the furniture evolved by time, and consists of wax, dirt and friction. After this treatment work up the surface again with a good beeswax polish. If the situation should be more serious it is safer and wiser to consult an expert and let him do the work required.

Thomas Rohan in his book, *In Search of the Antique*, published in 1927, says: "In *Old Beautiful* I wrote a chapter on the future, wherein I prophesied that in 25 years there would be no dealers in antiques, simply because there would be no antiques to sell. By the look of things to-day I am of opinion that half 25 years will see the end of dealing in beautiful things." But this seems to me altogether too doleful a picture. The situation has not yet arisen and I am optimistic enough to think that it will not come.

There always has been and I believe always will be dispersal of furniture due to deaths and other misfortunes, and while the especially outstanding pieces may find their way and repose for ever in the museums, the rest will remain for circulation when the new owners' treasures are dispersed as they must be sooner or later.

And it may well be that the present-day prices may be considered bargains at some future date in the light of the lessening of purchasing power which has been going on for centuries.

FUSELI

BY SIMON HARCOURT-SMITH

TO the superficial glance, what could be safer, more serene than the world of Reynolds and Romney? Only the sigh of plumes, the coo of babies and pigeons disturb the park newly enclosed. The sun, flattered by ribbon and lace, will never be obscured: no clouds will venture near it; still less will the night dare to pull it down; dreams, the moaning wind, something officious behind the wainscot, —why talk of them, for darkness will never come?

But suddenly the brilliant light grows grey; and when it recovers its gold, the ubiquitous radiance is gone; instead there blaze two



Falstaff in the Buck-Basket

or three dazzling concentrated beams that leave everything around them in a mischievous darkness. The pigeons and the babies flee or are sacrificed. The air is filled with the sound of beating wings. But it is hard to tell where the sound comes from; surely not from that decent little gentleman in black with the flashing eyes, and the thick foreign accent, who trips towards us? But, yes! He it is who has smashed the bright, deathless idyll. Never will we see it again. Yet its bright fragments are not lost; they fly into the little gentleman's hand, and, presto! he has assembled them again, but hardly in their first genial pattern.

The little gentleman is Johann Heinrich Fuseli (1741-1818) or Füssli, from Zurich.

Nobody has yet discovered an explanation for the sudden flaring into cultural brilliance of certain nations, and their no less rapid relapse into obscurity. The glories of Dutch art in the XVIIth century can perhaps be attributed in some measure to the quickening of emotions and sensibilities in the late war of liberation against the Spaniards. But under French protection, XVIIIth century Switzerland dozed untroubled. Yet it was the one great age of Swiss intellectual life, the age of Rousseau, Lavater, Linnaeus, Neckar, and his overpowering daughter, of Laharpe, of Vaucanson and Jacquet-Droze who carried the making of watches and automata to the very frontiers of magic; in painting, it was the age of Fuseli.

His father was a respectable, unadventurous "society" painter of Zurich. But from the first, the boy's brain was on fire. He began as a writer—his approach to painting was to be literary beyond all—and an aspirant to Holy Orders, which he entered in 1761. Two years later he fell out with the local authorities over an imprudent political pamphlet, fled with Cavater to Berlin, and through the agency of a friendly British Ambassador, reached England in 1764, when this country still enjoyed the reputation of being the "land of the free." He acquired a certain renown as the author of "Remarks on the Writings and Conduct of J. J. Rousseau," met Reynolds, under his influence forsook writing for the fine arts.

The moment was propitious for an artist to exploit the visual possibilities of the supernatural. It was the age of the "Castle of Otranto," of Cazotte's "Diable Amoureux," of Wilhelm August Bürger's "Leanora." Mesmer was providing relatively painless journeys into the subconscious; Fuseli himself boldly declared that "among the most unexplored regions of art are dreams."

But popularity came not only through the distorted dreams of his own, the wicked horses with blazing eyes that whinnied at the foot of the bed or jumped through the window from the room where the

two voluptuous girls lay guilty: Madame de Stael by her "De L'Allemagne" stirred France with yearning for the "gothic" ecstasies of Germany; Fuseli, closer still to Germany than his compatriot from Geneva, by such a work as "Hagen and the Nymphs of the Danube" (No. 27), catered to a romanticism in the English that the Augustan convention had never quite killed. Even to-day the dark onyx-like brilliance of that painting stirs one with the memory of some story one has never been told.

Another phase of Fuseli's art is obsessed, often to an extremely erotic degree, with women. They were women seen through a very particular eye, delicious elongated creatures, with noble shoulders, swan necks and towering hair. Fuseli is said to have been influenced towards this formula by the statue labelled "Julia" in the Capitoline Museum at Rome. But may he not also have been moved by the fashions of the time for coiffures a yard high?

In an age and a school that had developed an almost uniformly "polite" style, Fuseli is distinguished by a highly personal manner. It is a manner fated to excite controversy. The surrealists have claimed him for their own, probably because of his views on dreams; the general run of connoisseurs concede that he draws well, but decry his oils. With this fashionable view, some of us at least must feel bound to disagree. True, Fuseli in Reynolds' view was England's leading "historical painter," and to appreciate "historical painting" of his strange complexity one must be soaked even in the secret thoughts of the late XVIIIth century. Then Cézanne has taught us to look at a picture less for its literary implications than for its plastic and atmospheric virtues, or the balance of its masses—which is a rejection of "historical painting's" main point. But even through these puritanical tests of modern art-criticism many of Fuseli's oils pass triumphantly. "The Women of Hastings" (No. 12), for instance, with its exquisite ghostly figures floating in a high wind and blowing into one's head Heaven knows what incomprehensible nostalgia; "The Fermor Children" at Easton Neston, whose absence from the exhibition is strongly to be deplored; and the splendid "Falstaff in the Buck-Basket." One would go far through the English School to find another composition so spirited, a leg and thigh so masterfully yet prettily painted as that of the right-hand girl, a better fore-shortening than that of the old reprobate. In the background is a touch of characteristic mystery. On the mantelpiece to the left sit apparently porcelain figures that at first we take for Chinese grotesques. It was, after all, the age for them. But no. Peering closely, we dimly apprehend creatures with sinister elephantine mugs that might have stepped out of a painting by Jerome Bosch, but Fuseli in all probability never saw a Bosch. . . .

THE MATTHEW BOULTON PATTERN BOOKS

PART II

BY W. A. SEABY AND R. J. HETHERINGTON

TILL now one of the most valuable keys to Boulton's *objets* is contained in two catalogues of his wares sold by "Mr. Christie at his Great Room next Cumberland House in Pall Mall" in April, 1771, and again in May, 1778. Copies of these catalogues are extremely rare and the writers are much indebted to Mrs. Finberg for allowing us to transcribe from her copy, which originally belonged to the sculptor, Richard Hayward (d. 1800), and to Messrs. Christie, Manson & Woods Ltd. for allowing us to transcribe from the auctioneer's copies, giving both reserve and sale prices of the various lots as well as the names of purchasers. The earlier sale is by far the more interesting from the point

such as the clocks and altars, combining figures from classical mythology with the extravagances of the French XVIIIth century school.

From the detailed wording, some objects can with reasonable certainty be identified with the pattern book designs in Volume I. Thus, for instance, we find under lot 85 on April 11th, 1771, "an horizontal time-piece in or moulu representing Venus at the tomb of Adonis, and on the urn is engraved the following inscription :

ΑΙ ΑΙ
Τὸ Κυθραιου
Απολετω
Καλος Αδωνις"



Fig. VII. Vol. I, p. 83. Ewer, cream jugs, hot-water jugs, chocolate and coffee pots. The first design is probably the original of the fine pair of ewers at Birmingham Art Gallery (Fig. VI illustrated in Part I).

of view of buyers, although it is not always easy to interpret the auctioneer's abbreviated names. Generally the lots appear to have been sold at, or a little above, the reserve price, but in some cases were sold or withdrawn well below the latter figure. For the most part the wares are of *radix amethysti* and *or moulu*, the former being better known to-day as Blue John or more correctly Derbyshire Fluorspar, perhaps the most beautiful coloured crystalline stone in the world. The objects are decorative vases and urns, candlesticks, candle vases and branched candelabra, essence-pots, altars, sugar dishes and figure groups; there are also several elaborate time-pieces in which the clock is subordinate to the case. These pieces from the catalogue descriptions are in "the antique taste," a few,



Fig. VIII. Silver hot-water jug. Maker's mark : "M.B." and "I.F.," Birmingham, 1774. The design for this piece appears as the first illustration on p. 87 of Vol. I (Fig. IX). This jug by Boulton and Fothergill is now at the City of Birmingham Art Gallery.

This piece was purchased by Sir W. W. Wynn for thirty guineas, the reserve having been set at £30. It can be identified with a drawing (No. 4) on page 171 of Vol. I (Fig. III). An attempt to trace this particular piece at Wynnstay, Denbighshire, has not so far proved successful, but it must be remembered that many purchases may have been for gifts or for the decoration of town houses, which were later given up and the contents sold.

Similarly lot 96 of the sale on Saturday, May 18th, 1778, bought in at one guinea under the reserve of £21, "the Emperor Titus in bronze, lamenting the loss of a day, the pedestal in statuary marble, ornamented with or moulu for a time-piece, the motto *diem perdidit*", can be easily identified with a design on p. 169 of Vol. I, against

THE MATTHEW BOULTON PATTERN BOOKS

which a wag in the XIXth century has written "Cetawayo" [the Zulu king who during his rule from 1872 to 1884 opposed the progress of the Boers and British on the Natal border] (Fig. XI). The identity of the figure with Titus is, however, confirmed by the inscription on the urn of his famous remark, "Diem perdidit" (I have lost a day)—alluding to his annoyance at being late in giving a present; an ironical quotation for a clock which would delight the connoisseur of the period. Boulton was certainly no scholar of classical languages but he was a great friend of Dr. Samuel Parr, Vicar of Hatton, Warwickshire, accounted the foremost Greek scholar of his time. Almost certainly he would have suggested themes and ideas to Boulton for his decorative figure groups, and the Greek text on the Adonis altar, as well as the motto just

appears in the V. and A. Museum Catalogue of Georgian Furniture (Pl. 108, p. 18).

Sir Lawrence was a direct ancestor of the present Marquess and it is to be noted that his son, the first Baron Dundas, married the sister of Earl Fitzwilliam, himself a patron of Boulton, for the name "Lord Fitzwilliam" or "Fitzwilliams" appears three times in the first sale catalogue. Recently the Victoria and Albert Museum has acquired from the sale of Earl Fitzwilliam's property from Wentworth Wodehouse a perfume burner, having caryatids on a triangular marble plinth. The design of this piece does not appear in the pattern books, but others somewhat similar in general treatment are to be found both in the pattern books and in the sale

mentioned, were in all probability supplied by him.

An interesting entry, the last lot, No. 84, of the three-day sale in 1771 reads as follows: "a magnificent Persian candelabra for 7 lights in which is inserted a vase of the largest and most beautiful piece of *radix amethysti* the mines hath ever produced which with the double branches etc. is supported by three Persians finely modelled, standing on a triangular plinth of statuary marble ornamented with military trophies proper for the subject." This *pièce de résistance* of the 1771 sale was reserved at £200 but seems to have been bought in for £190 by G. Barton, possibly an agent employed by Boulton to run the bidding, since many "purchases" by him at prices below the reserve figure occur in the catalogue.

A similar lot bought in at the end of the second sale is No. 126 described as "a superb CANDELABRA with six branches, *radix amethysti* supported by three



Fig. IX. Vol. I, p. 87. Jugs and coffee pots, etc. The first design is the original of one in the Birmingham Art Gallery.

Persians after M. Angelo, the plinth suitably ornamented and richly gilt in *or moulu*." These figures were probably taken from a rather "free" copy, such as were being sent over to England at this time, of one of the dying and heroic figures of the Four Unfinished Slaves of Michelangelo for the Tomb of Pope Julius II, now at the Academia in Florence (see *Sculptures of Michelangelo*, Phaidon Press, 1939-40, No. 68).

This lot was reserved at only £55 (a reflection on the financial slump about this time) but the "candelabra" was "bought by Nixon" (almost certainly the auctioneer's pseudonym for "No bid") at 52 guineas, 8 shillings below reserve. A pair of candelabra similar to these was purchased by the National Art-Collections Fund for the Victoria and Albert Museum in the sale, held at Christie's in April, 1934, of property from 19 Arlington Street, the Marquess of Zetland's London residence. The pieces were made to the order of Robert Adam for the decoration of the house for Sir Lawrence Dundas at Moor Park about 1765. A photograph



Fig. X. Vol. I, p. 105. Group of tureens in Adam style. No. 6 is the design used for the fine pair in silver, hall-marked: Birmingham, 1776, in the Birmingham Assay Office.

catalogues. Several other items in the 1771 sale can be identified with certainty against numbered designs in Vol. I, e.g. No. 755, p. 19 (Fig. IV) and No. 767 on p. 76. While it cannot be proved conclusively that these objects, a Triton candelabrum and a Minerva clock, were produced in the year of the sale, the fact that the two numbers are so close together, and therefore contemporaneous, makes it probable that they were recent productions when auctioned. If therefore we assume that Nos. 755 and 767 do belong to 1771 we can sketch out a skeleton chronology for the whole system of numbering.

The earliest and most important datable pattern in Vol. I is No. 399, one of a pair of Blue John candelabra made for Queen Charlotte (Fig. IV). This pair was ordered by George III in 1767, as noted by Dr. H. W. Dickinson in his life of Matthew Boulton, published in 1936, p. xiii. How long the commission took to complete we do not know but in 1771 we find Boulton in London for his sale and obtaining audiences of the king and queen at



Fig. XI. Vol. I, p. 169. Group of decorative marble urns, etc. The central design is for the "Titus" clock, c. 1770, the inscription on the urn reading: *Diem peridi*. The name "Cetawayo" has been written by a later hand.

Buckingham House. Writing to his wife during this London visit we learn from an important but undated letter in the Assay Office at Birmingham that the king had purchased a pair of cassiolets, a Titus and a Venus clock and some other things. In the same letter he deplores the current taste in artistic production and says that he has not sold his two finest clocks (probably the lavishly ornamented repeating clocks No. 88 of 11th April and No. 93 of 12th April) which he suggests he will send to Catherine the Great of Russia. This apparently he did do a year or so later through the agency of Earl Cathcart.

The magnificent candelabra now at Windsor Castle are amongst Boulton's finest pieces. Together with a pair of Blue John cassiolets or essence vases (probably those mentioned in the letter of 1771) and a square-cased bracket clock of the same material also richly ornamented with ormolu, the movement by Thomas Wright of Poultry, they form a garniture on the chimneypiece of the Queen's private Drawing Room (Fig. V). That they have occupied this important position since the days of Queen Charlotte is borne out by an illustrated inventory, dated 1828 and made for George IV, in which the pieces are plainly represented and in which it is stated that they were removed from the chimneypiece of the Queen's Drawing Room at Buckingham House.

A very fine cassiolette in Blue John with ormolu mounts, now at Birmingham City Art Gallery, can be identified with pattern No. 6 on p. 171 of Vol. I (Part I, Fig. IV).

An interesting feature of the pattern books is the way in which new forms of articles of everyday use suddenly make their appearance. The best example is the Argand Lamp, the patent for which was bought by Boulton on May 1st, 1784. No fewer than 26 patterns for this remain, their numbers running between 1331 and 1422, and one 1528. They show a range of design, based primarily on the more formal two-branched candlestick, but are especially interesting as demonstrating Boulton's inventive mind in applying mechanical devices to his own artistic productions. Indeed it was by these very means that he, a leading manufacturer of the provinces, was able to keep abreast of so many of his rivals in London and on the Continent.

Another example is the first appearance of the now familiar spring sugar bows which occupy patterns No. 647-651, indicating a date about 1769. The writers have failed to discover exactly when this form of table-ware came into fashionable use but it is not improbable that Boulton took a lead in its introduction. Later patterns, which may be dated, are the Bath metal tobacco boxes, made for the East India Company about 1782 according to Watt's memoir of Boulton (Dickinson, p. 205). Examples found in Vol. I are numbered 1266-8.



Fig. XII. Pair of candelabra in Blue John richly ornamented with ormolu, Birmingham City Art Gallery. For a similar pair see P. McQuoid and R. Edwards: *The Dictionary of English Furniture*, Vol. II, p. 24, Fig. 43. (This design does not appear among the extant patterns in the Pattern Books but is almost certainly by Boulton, c. 1765.)

THE MATTHEW BOULTON PATTERN BOOKS

Many numbered patterns of silverware may eventually be dated, approximately at least, from the hall-marked pieces; as for instance No. 1661, an egg-stand, of which an example, dated 1789, is in the collection at the City Art Gallery, Birmingham. A finely decorated silver tureen, now in the Birmingham Assay Office collection and illustrated in Dickinson, plate VI, is hall-marked Birmingham 1776; it appears on page 105 of Vol. I, but is unfortunately unnumbered (Fig. X). A fine hot-water jug, hall-marked Birmingham 1774, in the City Art Gallery Collection at Birmingham may be traced to the first design on p. 87 of Vol. I (Figs. VIII and IX).

The dies, which were sold at the same time as the pattern books in 1850, were purchased by several of the Birmingham plate firms. They have been used for making parts of many and various decorative metal objects but not always with the skill of the former craftsmen. In consequence one finds to-day many pieces coming from the Birmingham jewellers' quarter which in their appearance and design still reveal something of the great tradition established by Matthew Boulton in the late XVIIIth and early XIXth centuries.

The value and interest of these pattern books to-day is not, however, provincial. Edited, annotated and fully illustrated they would make a remarkable and exhaustive guide to the forms adopted in the applied arts in metal and stone throughout the whole of the neo-classical, Regency, Empire and early Victorian periods. They would show, too, the wealth and vitality of English craftsmanship during one of our most highly civilized epochs, including, as they probably do, designs by men such as Adam, Flaxman, Chambers, "Athenian" Stuart, Francis Eginton and George Wyon, all of whom are known to have worked in this connection for Boulton. The writers suggest that the publication of such a volume or volumes might coincide with the exhibition of 1951 when craftsmen and art lovers from all over the world will have their attention focussed on Britain's industry, arts and crafts, both present and past.

The writers would like to express their thanks to Mr. F. J. Patrick, the Birmingham City Librarian, for his permission to publish this initial account of the Pattern Books, and to Mr. Trenchard Cox, Director of the City Art Gallery, for permission to publish photographs of objects in the collection.



THE NEW AND THE OLD TELEVISION NOTES

BY B. BELLAMY GARDNER

FOR collectors of antiques, seekers of knowledge, and lovers of all things rare and beautiful, television is the newest—and possibly most valuable—means of seeing and hearing of the treasures of the world.

The B.B.C. Television Service makes a point of keeping viewers informed: it does this by providing programmes about current exhibitions and works of art; and by showing renowned artistic pieces, discussing their qualities and describing their histories.

In the former category there is a regular monthly presentation titled simply "Round the Galleries." The Art Critic guides the viewer with information about some of the many exhibitions running in London and the Home Counties.

The way in which this is televised is important because it does show how an informational programme can be made interesting not only to the artistically inclined observer, but also to the ordinary layman.

Part of one of the television studios is transformed into an art gallery, the critic walks into the scene, starts talking and directs the viewer's attention to a particular picture in the gallery. It is, perhaps, a picture loaned from an exhibition currently on in London. The picture is described, with notes on what the painter has been trying to do, how he has achieved his object, and his method of working. Mention is made of where this and other pictures may be seen; and the viewer is invited to visit the gallery.

Next, the viewer sees a sculpture. This, he is told, is one of the objects which will be shown in the near future. It may be part of a travelling exhibition, in which case there is some reference to the cities and locations where it will be on view.

This programme, then, serves a double purpose. It tells viewers about current and potential exhibitions, showing them examples; and it also whets their appetite sufficiently to make them actually want to visit the exhibitions and see all the pieces displayed.

For the *objets d'art* which the average viewer is unlikely to be able to see, either by reason of its extreme rarity or because of

where it is to be found, there are a number of isolated programmes transmitted as the opportunity occurs. A recent and effective example of this was a programme last month on the Lascaux Caves.

There is, too, the recently started monthly series called "Private View," in which television outside broadcast cameras visit Museums. The first three of these programmes (in January, February and March) have the British Museum as the site in which viewers are shown some of the nation's treasures. The first programme, for instance, featured such objects as the Gold Cup used by the Kings of France, ancient Egyptian relics, and some of the valuable documents from the Manuscript Department.

The compère introduces each exhibit, and then hands over to an expert from the department concerned who describes something of its history, points out the finer details, and discusses why it is such a treasure. It will be appreciated that whereas the expert is able to talk fluently on his subject, it is sometimes necessary to keep the talk down to an earthy level which the average viewer will be able to understand.

There is, indeed, much to be seen on television which is of interest to all collectors.



COVER PLATE

Among the names which have acquired a new significance because of the Burlington House Exhibition of Landscape in French Art is that of Hubert Robert. "Robert des Ruines": the sobriquet has for long been one which tended to relegate him to the sentimentality of the Picturesque which, with his Italian master, Pannini, he did so much to establish. But Robert did not only draw and paint classical ruins, although he did that supremely well; he set them in landscapes which in themselves were the forerunners of the later landscapists of French art. Indeed, it is well to remember that Robert's active period was that second half of the XVIIIth century when the ideas of Jean Jacques Rousseau were the new leaven in European thought. In one aspect Robert is the last-ditcher of the old classicism; in another he is the first convert of the new romanticism. It was a tribute to his standing in the new vogue that he was commissioned by the king to re-design part of the erstwhile formal garden of Versailles in the natural, so-called "English" manner.

This delightful painting, "The Sketching Party," at present in the possession of Messrs. Agnew, is a triumph of that spirit of romanticism. True, there is the ruined temple crowning the cliff by the waterfall, but it is part of the natural landscape and no longer the whole subject of the picture. Nor is the landscape in any way formal or balanced. The solidly painted cliff, the graceful fall of the water, the swinging line of the bank of the pool below, the finely observed distance: all these are landscape art freed from formal pattern and taken direct from nature. The lively group scattered along the bank owes nothing to Poussin or Claude.



METAMORPHOSE

The peaceful and rural scene in the manner of M. A. Rooker which we reproduced in the January issue of *APOLLO*, on page 26, and for which the enquirer sought the name of the village or town which was pictured, proves to be a water-colour of that, now, very active thoroughfare, Upper Street, Islington, London, viewed from Pullins Row, at about 1830, or earlier. Correspondents have written that a Samuel Cave (the name shown on a shop in the picture) appears in the London Directory of 1823-24, and a print of a similar scene with a few minor differences including a small octagonal building which appears to be a cottage toll gate, bears the inscription, "View from Pullins Row, Islington. Pubd. May 1, 1819, for the Proprietor by R. Ackermann, 101, Strand."

Mr. H. C. P. Smail, who sent us the print, writes that John Evans (1767-1821) opened a school at 7 Pullins Row sometime after 1795. Evans traced his descent through an unbroken line of Baptist ministers from the Thomas Evans, minister at Maesmynis, Brecknockshire, during the Commonwealth. He wrote a number of instructional and theological books and some Travellers' Guides, including the earliest on Worthing, in 1805.

XVIIIth CENTURY PROFILES

BY JOHN WOODIWISS

THE golden age of British profilists was, in comparison with that of the miniaturist, a short one. Though a shadow portrait of William III and Mary is said to have been taken by a Mrs. Pyburg in the XVIIth century, it was not until about 1780 that a definite school of British silhouette artists came into its own.

At its outset, profile-taking was a dignified art, but slowly its status became tarnished by various tawdry innovations, until it deteriorated into a kind of side-show where an adroit scissor-man snipped black portraits at great speed from pieces of paper and mounted the result on white cards for as little as sixpence a time. Gone were the almost miraculously fine and detailed paintings on plaster, card, or on the inner surface of convex or flat glass; gone was the superb artistry of master craftsmen, and in exchange patrons had to be content with the uninspired black and white silhouette.



Portrait of a young girl by John Miers, painted in black and grey on plaster. This portrait bears the first London label and is therefore circa 1788.

It is always dangerous to make positive statements concerning any form of art, but in this case it can be fairly said that the finest productions of the profilist's genius were never cut out but painted.

The cutting of shadow portraits, however, was about the earliest method employed. Mrs. Sarah Harrington, a very early practitioner, snipped her portraits from the centre of a piece of white paper and by placing a black backing behind produced a black profile outlined by white. This meant most accurate scissor work, for the least slip of the blades, a fraction too much off forehead, nose or chin, and the likeness was ruined.

The earliest account of Mrs. Harrington's activities which I have been able to discover dates from about 1776 when (November 23rd) an advertisement in the *Leeds Mercury* announces that she is working at "Mr. Harrison's, Merchant, Mill Hill, Leeds," and that she "takes striking likenesses at 2/6." There are also accounts of her visits to Manchester, Liverpool, Doncaster, Oxford and Cambridge in the same year, while her London address was 131 Bond Street.

Mention of Leeds brings us to one of the most esteemed painters of profile portraits, John Miers, who was born there in December, 1757. He began work in his native town, and after a protracted tour of many of the principal cities of Britain, eventually settled in London at 111 The Strand, in 1788. Miers' speciality was the painting of delicately shaded portraits on specially prepared ovals of white composition (or "plaster" as it is sometimes called). His frames of pinchbeck, papier-mâché or lustrous wood were in the most perfect taste, as were the "crystal glasses" with which the portrait was sometimes surrounded. The frames were often backed with his printed trade label. Miers died in 1821 and was buried in the graveyard of St. Paul's, Covent Garden, while his extensive business was carried on by his son in partnership with his famous pupil, John Field, one of the most notable exponents of shading with bronze paint who ever took brush in hand.



Frederick Duke of York, and son of George III, by C. Rosenberg of Bath. Taken at Cheltenham in 1788. Painted on flat glass.



Portrait of an unknown man by Mrs. Edward Beetham. Painted on convex glass with backing of card.

XVIIIth CENTURY PROFILES



Mrs. Richard Molesworth (née Betty Cobb), painted profile by Torond.

Charles Christian (Carl) Rosenberg (1745 to 1844) painted plain black portraits on the back of the flat or convex frame-glass. This clever artist was an Austrian who came to England as a page in the suite of Princess Charlotte, afterwards consort to George III. Rosenberg later became a State Messenger, and being a skilful amateur profilist, finally retired from Court and set up as a professional artist at Bath. His first address in the city was "Mr. Tucker's, St. James' Parade," where he remained from 1787-1790. Having married a Bath lady, Miss Wooley, at the Abbey, on February 4th, Rosenberg moved to the fashionable North Parade (1790-1798), and finally changed his residence to 14 The Grove, where he remained until 1804, at which date he evidently retired from business. Though the Prince of Wales gave him a special sitting in 1799 and the Duke of York was godfather to his son; though he took profiles of George III and all his family, Rosenberg finally fell upon hard times. His wife opened a school in 1806 and his later advertisements announce such "side lines" as "Lodgings to be lett" and a "Weighing machine" by means of which invalids could have their weights accurately determined for a shilling each season. The old man died at Bath in 1844, at the advanced age of 99. His work is heavier and the pigment used more opaque than that of his contemporaries. The intense blackness was achieved by a mixture of small beer and pine soot. Rosenberg had several different trade labels and generally placed a pink backing behind his portraits "in imitation of marble."

Mrs. Isabella Beetham of 27 Fleet Street, London, was both cutter and the finest shadow portrait painter of all time. Her husband, formerly an actor, made a handsome fortune by inventing the roller mangle, and his ingenuity was also responsible for the wonderfully decorated glasses which, in some cases, surrounded his wife's profiles. Mrs. Beetham's best portraits are painted on convex glass and are of such a diaphanous quality that the shadow outline is thrown on to a backing of plaster or card, which gives it a sense of ethereal beauty never attained by any other artist.

Torond, a painter of French nationality, whose studio was at 18 Wells Street, London, was a tasteful exponent of the art of taking "conversation pieces." His figures, in their wigs and piled head-dresses, are gathered most naturally about the room, surrounded by their pets and the younger members of the family. The pair of Torond profiles in my collection are of Richard Molesworth, Esq., of His Majesty's Pay Office, and Betty (née Cobb),

his wife. A few weeks after I had acquired them, I came across an announcement of their wedding in *The Gentleman's Magazine*.

William Wellings, who was evidently a commercial artist and designer of stage scenery and costumes, produced many painted shades. One delightful example in the South Kensington Museum shows two charming ladies, a young belle reading to an older woman who holds a quaint pair of spectacles. This was drawn in indian ink, in 1782.

One of George III's peculiarities was his almost fanatic delight in the art of profile. Foster and Rosenberg both lived at Windsor Castle, and literally dozens of artists, including Miers, took portraits of the eccentric king. The most successful of these was that painted by T. Hamlet of Bath. As a perfect character study of the quirky, inquisitive old monarch this portrait, painted on the back of a flat glass, will probably never be excelled. The absence of distracting detail enables the artist to portray the odd character of his subject in a truly uncanny manner.

There were many other excellent profilists, Charles, Mrs. Lightfoot of Liverpool, Mrs. Bull, Walter Jordan and I. Thomason, to mention but



George III in Windsor uniform (a silhouette on the flat glass) by Hamlet of Bath.

a few, who should be included among the important members of the XVIIIth century school of shadow painters, but space forbids more than a mention of their names.

With the disappearance of the peruke and piled head-dress, the dignified shadow portraits began to decline in artistic importance. From this time, also, the name "profile" and "shade" were replaced by the more utilitarian title of "silhouette" and the atelier of the delicate painter degenerated into the booth of the "man with the scissors." A few years later the invention of the camera brought a virtual end to profile cutting, and now the silhouette artist is merely regarded as the last survival of a curious and interesting form of portraiture.

XVIIIth century profiles are becoming increasingly rare and when a good specimen appears in the sale room, there is generally keen competition for it. Their collection will, consequently, become more difficult as years go by, for many of the most perfect examples have already found their way across the Atlantic; American collectors were not slow to appreciate these little masterpieces.

MUSEUMS— POST-WAR FASHIONS

THE last war not only emptied the museums of Europe for the duration, it also gave the museum directors the opportunity or the excuse to undertake reorganisations which have proved to be so fundamental and far-reaching that the major part of the public collections in London and Paris are still denied to the public. Many of us have now forgotten just what the pre-war museums were like; furthermore, a whole generation of collectors has grown up who, before 1939, had not yet developed the sort of interests that would take them into a museum. It is evident that the 1914-18 war did not breed so ambitious a spirit in the hearts of those rare personages who determine the policies of the great museums. It is sufficient to recall the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, the Cluny Museum in Paris, the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna as they were organised and arranged in 1939 to realise that the spirit, not merely of 1914 but of the XIXth century, was strongly manifested in them. Now those institutions that cling to more traditional methods of display have become themselves museum pieces, sociological documents. The modern museum offers us all the benefits of the modern departmental store, except of course for the shop assistants, with pastel shades, soft lighting, and culture without tears. The classic "museum-piece" Museum, the Hotel de Cluny in Paris, will inspire no more romantic reveries; it was reopened last summer in its new guise as an up-to-date repository of medieval art. The old stuffy fantastic atmosphere of the place has gone, and all is now spacious and well-lit—somewhat of an anachronism in this mediaeval home. With a charming touch of piety, just a memory of the former arrangement has been left in the vestibule leading to the exit, and there suits of armour (always a popular feature in mid-XIXth century collections), Renaissance marbles of dubious virtue, richly patinated bronzes, over-carved and re-carved cassetoni, and important-looking Gothic cupboards, constructed with great ingenuity around one or two authentic XVth century panels, may be seen in a jumble worthy of the Great Exhibition of 1851. In those cities which were little affected by the war the Museums have retained their pre-war appearance, with all its corresponding disadvantages. The visitor to Basel, for instance, to take a city which certainly has no war losses to lament, will find that the Basel Münster treasure, the most important single group of later mediaeval goldsmiths' work to be seen in Europe, is still crowded into too small a case in a dark side chapel of the mediaeval monastic church which still does service for a museum building. At Bergamo again, one of the few towns of Northern Italy that completely escaped the ravages of war, the Accademia Carrara, with its hundreds of canvases of very unequal merit, has been restored to its pre-1900—or should one say 1800—condition. The neighbouring city of Brescia, on the other hand, which felt the full weight of American aerial bombardment, has repaired its museum and re-equipped it in a way that would do credit to a metropolis.

At last admirers of the arts of Islam have something to look at in the Victoria and Albert Museum; the West Central Court, occupied by the Near-Eastern "primary" collections, was opened to the public just before Christmas. The curious visitor (or reader) may perhaps pause at this stage to ask himself what exactly is meant by "primary." In the post-war arrangement of the Victoria and Albert Museum this question is a fundamental one. Presumably a "primary" object is an object of first-rate importance. But from what point of view, and by what criteria, historical or aesthetic? Whatever the answer—if indeed there is an answer—to this thorny question, this is an impressive display, admirably arranged, labelled, and lighted, with the whole inevitably dominated by the monumental Ardabil carpet.

The main court is approached through a small annexe devoted to the earliest periods of Islamic art and to the Islamic book. The "star" exhibit here is the Fatimid crystal ewer (Xth-XIth cent.) which rightly occupies a case of its own, though not perhaps best served by its background of mauve distemper. It is flanked by some fine early pottery, and a group of Hispano-Moresque ivories.

The adjoining display of miniatures and manuscripts reveals a serious deficiency in the Museum collections, assuming that these aim at being representative. There are one or two good examples of Arabic writing, but only one Persian manuscript (without miniatures) earlier than the XVIth century. A double-page of superb illumination, signed by 'Abd al-Latif, belongs to a manuscript of 1528, but the only other notable book is the well-known

XVIIth century *Khusraw u Shirin* with miniatures signed by Rizā-yi 'Abbāsī. With detached miniatures the case is even worse. Only two are shown; both are of the Shirāz school of the mid-XVIth century, and, though good, are by no means of the first importance. The book-bindings exhibited leave little to be desired.

In the main court itself one may follow the development of the potter's art in an uninterrupted continuity from the XIIth century through the Mongol and Timurid periods as far as the XVIIIth century. The examples of all periods—especially, perhaps, in the earlier groups—are plentiful and of unexceptionable quality. The XIVth century Syrian glass lamps are magnificent, and many people will be glad to see the almost fabulous "Luck of Edenhall" with its mediaeval English leather case. In the pottery of the Timurid period direct imitations of Chinese "blue and white" begin to appear, continuing under the Safawid dynasty; whilst tantalising fragments of tile-work friezes of inscriptions and arabesques, some in the mosaic technique, show that the decoration of buildings in Bihzād's miniatures owes nothing to the artist's imagination. Contemporary Turkish tile-work and pottery are, as might be expected, somewhat less sophisticated and more garish than their Persian counterparts.

The display of textiles is also copious and fully representative. It includes some very notable early examples, one with pairs of haloed figures recalling the earliest "Mesopotamian" miniature paintings, some pieces of gold brocade of the XIVth century, and, of course, a magnificent selection of Persian and Turkish carpets and of the later brocades and velvets. Apart from the Ardabil carpet the most splendid example is a XVIth century "animal" carpet which formerly belonged to William Morris. Near it the imposing Egyptian pulpit and mosque-lamp from the reign of Qā'it Bā'i (1468-1496) will catch any visitor's eye, and another fine example of carved woodwork is to be seen in the doors from Samarqand (XIVth cent.). The lacquered doors from the Chehel Sittin Palace at Isfahān, installed originally in the reign of Shāh 'Abbās the Great (1587-1629), have been marred by XIXth century repainting.

Metalwork of all kinds has always been one of the chief glories of the Muslim craftsman, and his work is, in the earlier periods at least, well represented here. A superb openwork incense-burner in the form of a lion, and a fine lamp-stand are outstanding among the pieces from the period before the characteristic enrichment of gold and silver was introduced; and the examples of this latter technique up to the XIVth century are numerous and impressive. The majestic ewers, basins, and candlesticks produced in Persia, Egypt, and Syria between 1150 and 1350 are as fine as anything of their kind in the world, and the Victoria and Albert Museum used to show a considerable collection, of which the pieces here exhibited are apparently only the lightest skimming. But from the Mongol period onwards examples of the metalworker's craft in this exhibition are few and far between, until one finally stands hypnotized before the blazing gold dish and jewelled dagger of Fath 'Alī Shāh.

It is remarkable that this dagger is the only example exhibited of a branch of metalwork upon which Muslim craftsmen have always lavished their utmost skill, namely arms and armour. Persian armour and sword-blades in particular have long been proverbial in Western Asia for beauty of form combined with the highest practical efficiency, and it is hard to explain their exclusion from the present exhibition. Those who knew the museum before the war will remember that its collection of Near-Eastern arms and armour is by no means negligible.

This exhibition as a whole, though one receives the impression of a certain preponderance of pottery and textiles, provides an effective panorama of Muslim artistic achievement over the period of a thousand years. The weak spots are in metalwork of the Mongol, Timurid, and Safawid periods, miniature paintings, and arms and armour; but it may be that time will remedy these, either by judicious acquisitions or, possibly, by the inclusion in the exhibition of one or two objects not at present classed as "primary."

M.A.Q.

The interest in the Georgian period throughout the country appears to have influenced the formation of a Georgian Section of the Yorkshire Archaeological Society. The objects include the preservation of buildings of architectural or historical value in Yorkshire within the period 1700 to 1820, also the spreading of knowledge of interior decorations, ceramics, furniture and silverware, etc. It is hoped to have lectures and discussions, also visits to places of interest. Anyone interested should get into touch with the Secretary, Mrs. R. P. Kellett, "Groveholm," West End Lane, Horsforth.

AN UNUSUAL CHESS SET

CHESS, known in the East in the VIth century, is reputed to have been introduced to the British Isles by the Normans and to have been played first at Eglwysrw in Wales.

Though certainly not in the fine art class, the chessmen and chessboard, Figs. I, II and III, are most interesting and there is something very satisfying about their bold but simple turning. Their scale is such that they might have served the inhabitants of Brobdingnag. They are English and date from not later than the first half of the XVIIth century. Probably they were used in some "great hall," where they would have looked appropriate. The size of the "men" has to be seen to be believed. In an endeavour to portray it, I placed "men" from a fairly large ivory set in front of their wooden counterparts, but whilst I was not looking the knight and the bishop changed places! The dimensions are as follows:

Kings	..	12	ins. high by	3½	ins. diameter.
Queens	..	10½	"	3	"
Bishops	..	9½	"	2½	"
Castles	..	9	"	3	"
Knights	..	8	"	2½	"
Pawns	..	7½	"	2½	"

The set is complete and in a remarkably fine state of preservation.



It has suffered from worm at some time and some pieces have split as the result of unequal shrinkage, but substantially it is as made more than three hundred years ago. All the "white" and most

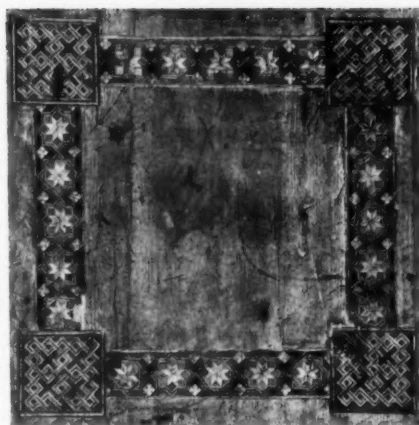


of the "black" men are beech, but some of the latter are ash. Time has faded the "blacks" and darkened the "whites" until now it is difficult to distinguish some of the one from the other.

Fig. I (left). The complete set and chess board.

Fig. II (left below). Chess pieces with comparative ivory pieces.

Fig. III (right). Underside of chess board with inlay, typical of "Nonesuch" chest borders of 1580-1640.



The table is most interesting, but something of a mystery. It measures 3 ft. 5 ins. square, with each of its squares 4½ ins. across. The board is of adze finished pine, the underframing of oak. There is no doubt of the age of either, but I am sure that they did not start life together, although the board is screwed to the framing by old, hand-made screws. In fact, I think it safe to say that the underframing was cut down to support the top, which originally was a loose board. That does not solve the whole mystery, however, for the underside of the pine board is inlaid with two squares of banding, the inner one of which is shown in Fig. III. This inlay is typical of the borders of the "Nonesuch" chests made between 1580 and 1640. Does it denote that someone of that period had an inlaid table top or board and found it convenient to make a chessboard on the reverse side, for all the squares are applied and are about ⅛ in. thick, or was it made originally as a reversible board and ornamental table top, or as the lid of a box for the chessmen? There is also the possibility that the inner and outer squares of inlay are not just ornament, but were used in some now forgotten game.

EDWARD H. PINTO.

NUT TREEN. Part III, Coquilla Nuts, by Edward H. Pinto, will appear in the April issue.

SOCIETY OF PEWTER COLLECTORS

Mr. Cyril C. Minchin, the Hon. Secretary of the Society, has reported a well-attended Annual Meeting at Grosvenor House, Park Lane, on January 14th last. Dr. H. G. Butterfield was elected Vice-President, and at the dinner which followed Mr. C. Noel Hunter, Master of the Worshipful Company of Pewterers, was a guest, as well as the Clerk of the Company and Air Chief Marshal Sir Frederick Bowhill. The former replied to the speech of the President, Mr. James C. Fenton, and Sir Frederick Bowhill toasted the ladies.

Particular reference was made to Mr. Michaelis' revision and editing of Massé's *Chats on Old Pewter*.

Ephraim Wood and the Wood Family of Burslem BY REGINALD G. HAGGAR

THE fame of the Woods, figure-makers of Burslem, has completely obscured the merits of other members of the same family. William Wood, who modelled for the Wedgwoods at Burslem and Etruria upwards of forty years, for example, is overshadowed by the reputation of his brother Enoch Wood. The latter, of course, was not merely a competent figure modeller and a successful manufacturer, but also a figure in the public life of early XIXth century Burslem, which accounts to some extent for his great local reputation.

The success of the Woods was due to the popularity of the figures and animals which they manufactured, many of which were extremely lovely, revealing a very true appreciation of related

clay and glaze qualities. Very popular some must have been, for they are known in many variants, and it is reasonable to assume that having struck a commercially successful line, neither of the Ralph Woods (nor Enoch Wood later) long enjoyed a monopoly in this class of products. In other words, just as the rivals of Wedgwood made cream-colour, basaltes and jasper, so the competitors of the Woods manufactured earthenware figures similar in style and character.

Now, there is one unrecorded figure-maker of the Wood family of Burslem who may have produced chimney ornaments and toys in emulation of Enoch Wood or the younger Ralph Wood, and it is just possible that good pottery figures made by him have been attributed to the more famous members of the family.

Some time before 1818, but after 1802, Ephraim Wood was making figures and toys and enamelling earthenware at Hole House, Burslem. He was still working in 1822 when the address was recorded as Nile Street. Pigot's directory of 1830 includes his name under this address under the heading "Enamellers, Lustrers, & Gilt Ornamenters of China & Earthenware," although as a manufacturer of earthenware toys his address was recorded as St. John's Square, Burslem. He was not there in 1834 when Ambrose Wood was working as a colour maker in Nile Street.

Ephraim Wood was baptised at Burslem, February 21st, 1773, and was the fifth son of Moses and Phoebe Wood. His father, Moses Wood, baptised February 4th, 1719, married Phoebe Marsh, daughter of Thomas and Sarah Marsh, in 1750. He lived to a good old age and died in 1791. Moses Wood was the third son of Ralph and Elizabeth Wood and was therefore the younger brother of Aaron Wood the blockcutter, and Ralph Wood the elder. Ephraim Wood, his son, was cousin to Enoch Wood and Ralph Wood the younger.

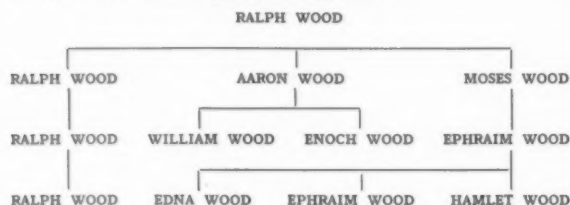
The marriage of Ephraim Wood took place at Norton-in-the-Moors in 1793, and is recorded below:

Ephraim [sic] Wood of Stoke p. and Ann Hopkins of Burslem p. by Fernihough Rowley, Feb. 3rd.

w—Jacob Bagdaley, Joseph Machin.

Ephraim and Ann had three children, all of whom were baptised at Burslem, Edna (Dec. 29th, 1793) and Ephraim and Hamlet (May 10th, 1801). Hamlet died in infancy.

Ephraim Wood's period as a toy-maker is restricted to about a quarter of a century, from about 1805 or later to 1830 or at the latest 1833. As far as I can ascertain, no marked or otherwise identifiable figures have ever been recorded as his products, although it is not unlikely that had he used an impressed mark it would have been E. WOOD, the same as his cousin Enoch. One wonders, in the circumstances, if there has been any confusion of Enoch Wood's work with that of his almost exactly contemporary cousin, or whether the figures made by Ephraim Wood may not have been in the familiar Wood style and therefore hardly distinguishable from them. In order to explain clearly the family relationship I have set it out in a simple genealogical table.



In a previous article I recorded a reclining yellow and green hind in Hanley Museum, marked S. BOURNE, and suggested that it may have been made by Samuel Bourne, potter, of Burslem, who married Sarah Taylor in 1774. It is definitely in the later Wood style and without the mark would pass as one of their products. Some association between the Woods and Bournes is clear, for Enoch Wood married Ann Bourne. Samuel Bourne may have been related to her. Some colour is given to this suggestion by the fact that a later Samuel Bourne, who became chief artist at Mintons, served his apprenticeship at Wood & Caldwell's.

Yet another problem is presented by the figure of Venus illustrated by Dr. Herbert Read in *Staffordshire Pottery Figures* (Plate 60). The figure is large in size, like many of the Enoch Wood pieces; is classic in subject, again like Enoch Wood's work, although rather ungainly and disproportionate, and shorn of the drapery and hair falling over her breast which would give both meaning to the pose and gestures, and balance to the model. It is impressed along the top front edge of the plinth with the name and

date, THOMAS LEEK, 1819. The position of the name suggests that it may have been a specially-marked piece; but who was Thomas Leek? No potters of this name are listed in local directories or the parish registers of Burslem or Stoke, unless the entry in the directory of 1822-1823 is an error.

Thomas Lees, figure maker, Sneyd Green, as it very easily could have been. However, there is record of a potter (Jewitt says he was a clever potter who married a niece of Enoch Wood and subsequently went to Australia, where he set up the first British earthenware pottery on Australian soil), Jonathan Leek at 20, Row, Burslem, in 1818. He too came from Norton-in-the-Moors, but was married at Burslem:

1798, Nov. 13. Jonathan Leek, of Norton in the Moors, potter & Mary Wood, of B., painter.
wits.: John Bourne & Emmanuel Leek.

Jonathan and Mary Leek lived at Kiln Croft, Burslem, and had several children, Aaron (bap. Mar. 6, 1803), Elijah (bap. Mar. 6, 1803), Stephen (bap. May 31, 1807) and Elisa (bap. Apr. 30, 1809).

This brings us to no certain solution of the individual marked pieces which occasionally crop up, but it does suggest that some of them may have been made by relatives or family connections at the factories of Ralph, Enoch or Ephraim Wood. Perhaps other APOLLO readers possess or know of other pieces in the Ralph or Enoch Wood styles with similar dates and marks. If so, the writer, who is compiling a list of marked earthenware figures, would be glad to receive detailed information.

BOOK REVIEW

A PANORAMA OF THE PROGRESS OF HUMAN LIFE by HENRY ALKEN, with an Essay by GUY PAGET, and an Introduction and Commentary by BERNARD DARWIN. Falcon Press. £2 2s. net.

In these days of austerity, of close-set type, narrow margins, and cheap production—at high prices—it is a pleasure to meet with a work that takes one back to older and more spacious days, in production as in subject. For such is the new edition of Henry Alken's *Panorama of the Progress of Human Life*, sponsored by the Falcon Press, with an essay by Guy Paget, and an introduction and commentary by Bernard Darwin. It made its appearance 130 years ago, in the last year of the Regency, the period which it depicts for us.

But who was Henry Alken? His name, as Guy Paget points out, is very nearly as widely known as that of any other English artist. Yet how many of those who know his name can say any more about him than that he was the man who did all those sporting prints, and especially of hunting scenes with lots of "grief" that one meets alike in castle, inn, and country cottage? When he was honoured with a place in the *Dictionary of National Biography* it is clear that nothing but his work was known to the writer of the notice. It was the labours of Shaw Sparrow that produced such of his life story as is now known, here summarised by Guy Paget. He was of a line of sporting artists which lasted from 1717 to 1894, and Paget refers to "the nine best known of the family."

If few know more than Alken's name and hunting pictures, fewer still could tell you that he was the father of the "strip" picture; for this is what his "Panorama" is. The thirty-five pictures comprising it show "the manners, costume, amusements, and field sports of a Regency 'buck,'" from his *enfant terrible* beginnings, through a rascally youth to the extravagances of a young man-about-town backing losers on the turf and in the ring, until the sponging house brings apparently irretrievable ruin. But in the true vein of the "strip" there is a happy ending. As Bernard Darwin says, "Here is no 'Road to Ruin' or 'Rake's Progress'"; an elopement, after a romantic escape, leads to Gretna Green—presumably with an heiress—a seat in Parliament, and a large and happy family circle.

The combination of Paget and Darwin is well chosen: the former writes, with the authority of the widest knowledge of sporting artists, of the man, his work, and his life—so far as it can be ascertained; while the latter, whom we associate primarily with golf, Dickens, and the leader page of *The Times*, links the artist with his period, the age that produced Pierce Egan and Charles Dickens, and pleasantly interprets the "Panorama" as it unfolds before us.

The reproduction of the "strip" is of equal quality with the "de luxe" make-up of the book, and no higher praise than this could be given. To the social historian, the picture lover, and the collector of fine books it must make an equal appeal.



BOOKS REVIEW

The Triumph of Rowlandson

WHEN Thomas Rowlandson died almost unnoticed in 1827, he was regarded chiefly as a clever book illustrator. Most people will agree to-day that he was "judged by his best drawings, England's greatest draughtsman" to quote Mr. Bernard Falk's admirable *Life and Art* (Hutchinson, £3 3s. 6d.), which is likely to be the most authoritative work on this long-neglected artist for many years to come. Many previously obscure details of Rowlandson's life have been cleared up by Mr. Falk in this scholarly and beautifully printed production. But the scholarship here is by no means heavy and pedantic, and the contemporary scene which Rowlandson so brilliantly captured passes before us in Mr. Falk's vivid pages which are profusely illustrated with excellent colour and half-tone plates.

At the same time as Mr. Falk's volume, Mr. Adrian Bury has also given us a delightful volume of collotype reproductions of eighty-two of Rowlandson's lesser-known drawings (Avalon Press, 25s.), accompanied by an admirably balanced appreciation and critical notes. For the majority who are not particularly interested in the artist's life, these reproductions give an excellent idea of his power as a draughtsman and depicter of contemporary life, although it is to be regretted no colour plates could be included among them.

For several reasons Rowlandson is probably more appreciated to-day than at any time in the 166 years that have elapsed since he exhibited what is perhaps the high-water mark of his genius, "Vauxhall Gardens" at the Royal Academy—that *tour de force* of draughtsmanship and colouring that strangely disappeared at the close of the Royal Academy's Exhibition of 1784 and reappeared in 1945, 161 years later, when it was bought in a small Walthamstow shop for one guinea and sold a few months later at Christie's for two thousand six hundred guineas. The Victorians objected to Rowlandson's somewhat Rabelaisian humour, as they did to passages of Shakespeare. His own age forgot him partly because his tremendous productive powers, stimulated by his poverty, had made his work, especially his pot-boiling work, over-familiar. His excellence as a caricaturist for long obscured his still greater excellence as a draughtsman, although Reynolds himself declared that his best work would have done honour to Rubens. Now at last he can be appreciated on his true merits, all the more because "his genial vision, caressed, as it were, by the warm gracious smile of the XVIIIth century" (to quote Mr. Falk) and set down by his inspired pen, seems to modern eyes, dazed with *horrendous* experiments in politics as in art, to portray a veritable golden age, so soon to be shattered by the Industrial Revolution.

Rowlandson had his limitations, as Mr. Falk points out. He was too idle and pleasure loving to be an industrious portrait painter like Gainsborough, whom he greatly admired, although his drawings of women could be even more charming and as exquisite as the creations of Corregio. He was curiously incapable of expressing pathos and tragedy, and correspondingly insensitive to moral values—a quality which he absorbed also from the brilliant profligate circle into which his art had given him

the entrée. And in his drawings of certain objects, like trees, his facility developed almost into mannerism.

An artist's personal life is rarely as interesting as the story of his artistic development, and Rowlandson is no exception. He was doing his best work by the time he was thirty and did nothing to improve on it in later life. His life story runs parallel—a brilliant rise to fame in early manhood, a taste for the expensive vices of the aristocratic circle he had entered, which rapidly impoverished him in spite of his aunt's legacy, then comparative poverty and obscurity which he never allowed to embitter him. And it must be admitted, as Mr. Falk says, that on the whole his was a rather disappointing personality.

Analysis and art criticism are all very well. What one enjoys is what one remembers, and anyone who has seen any of Rowlandson's work, will thank him for the memory of his sunny landscapes, picturesque villages, parades, picnics, genial absurdities, his robust yokels and buxom women and all the charming, intimate scenes of the XVIIIth century English town and country, and will perhaps not regret that he did not develop his wonderful gifts like another Rubens, in solemn portraits and monumental masterpieces. J.A.C.P.

A CALENDAR OF BRITISH TASTE. By E. F. Carritt. Routledge & Kegan Paul. 21s.

This "calendar of British taste" is well described in its sub-title, "a museum of specimens and landmarks," arranged by the author of *Philosophies of Beauty*. It is a most entertaining anthology by one who finds an "attractive by-path of history" in the realisation of the likes and dislikes of those who (like himself) found the greater part of their enjoyment in books, buildings and pictures, and in the varieties of natural scenery. Two centuries are covered by this calendar; and no other two centuries could have seen such fluctuations in taste; and no other country could have supplied such copious and surprising expressions of aesthetic theory. Mr. Carritt comes to the conclusion that at all times souls were born "classical" and "romantic," and that there were always people who preferred Shakespeare to Pope and moors to cornfields; and that there persisted under the Augustan age an "obstinate and often crude hankering after something very different, something at once simpler and more mysterious, rougher and more touching." The author instances as one of the virtues of his collection (a commonplace-book representing study of original sources from 1600 to 1800), that it contains nothing of his own; but something can be gathered from his rare notes. For instance, in a reference to the alterations to University College Hall in 1766, when a plaster ceiling of late Gothic design, deal Gothic panelling, and a chimney-piece given by Sir Roger Newdegate (said to be a copy of a Gothic tomb), he notes that in 1906 the ceiling was removed, the deal panelling replaced by oak, and Sir Roger's chimney-piece hidden.

The entries in each year fall into recurrent headings, such as manners and taste, poetry, architecture, and antiquarianism, and many interesting extracts can be found by consulting the third index, under "ruins," the "picturesque" and melancholy. Quite apart from its value to the student of aesthetics, the book is excellent reading, and full quotations are given from the letters of Gray and Horace Walpole: the one notable for his wide-ranging mind, the other for his brilliance. The date given for each citation is that of its publication, but in the case of a reference in Walpole's *Anecdotes of Painting to Kent's designs for ladies' birthday gowns*, the period of Kent's dominating influence is between about 1730 and his death in 1748. In the reference to Stuart & Revett's *Antiquities of Athens* (1762) this work had a delayed action, and did not influence the introduction of Greek detail at the time. The date of the publication of Chippendale's *Director* should be 1754.

AN INTRODUCTION TO GEORGIAN ARCHITECTURE. By Professor A. E. Richardson. Art and Technics. 25s.

The reigns of the four Georges cover a large period of time and two distinct architectural phases, the first dating from the first two reigns, the second coinciding with the long reign of the third George and the short reign of his son. This study, like others in this series, is an introduction; and as if cramped for space, Professor Richardson gives an allusive and breathless summary of this great building period, throwing out every now and then a brilliant comparison of English and French architecture. He includes excellent short appreciations of the work of Sir William Chambers, Robert Adam, the Wyatts, John Nash, and Sir John Soane, in which their contribution to this period of rich and diverse talent is assessed. He also emphasises the importance of the small builder, and of the number of compact and informative "copybooks" issued between about 1720 and 1800, to which the character of minor Georgian buildings is due. The survey has been completed by the inclusion of an account of the contemporary expansion of England, and of the shifting social and economic background. The masterly pen and ink drawings interrupt and enliven the text, and taken by themselves form a panorama of Georgian building. The complexity of the construction of a great house is not usually realised, and the recent study of the life of the first Duke of Chandos eliminates Archer as one of the architects of Cannons. Spencer House is given in the text to John Vardy, who published several engravings of the house as his own work; but it might have been added that the exterior was designed by an amateur, General Gray.

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Stories of Art

BY HORACE SHIPP

THE problems of writing anything so tremendous as a complete history of art in a comparatively small space, and of illustrating it adequately, are almost insoluble. Nevertheless the new Phaidon volume, *The Story of Art*, by E. H. Gombrich, has solved them. In 450 pages he reviews that widespread activity of mankind in one almost continuous narrative stretching from prehistoric cave paintings to the latest experimental work of the ultra-moderns. It is not the least valuable aspect of the book that he mentions no work which is not illustrated among the 370 pictures which form so valuable a part of it. This admirable idea has, of course, its inevitable limitation in eliminating reference to certain works (Rembrandt's "Night Watch" for instance) for which we might turn to any general history of art. In most instances, however, the author has chosen outstanding works, and upon these his comments are made to convey the style and import of each master. Another part of the scheme of the book is that, although architecture is necessarily sketchily dealt with (the author points out that this art is of all others the most documented) each phase is introduced by the typical architectural achievement. Altogether a remarkably good book, and magnificently produced as Phaidon Books usually are.

Another important general history of art is R. H. Wilenski's *French Painting* which has just been revised by the author and reissued by the Medici Society. Everything of the original edition, including the blocks, was destroyed by enemy action, so the ground was clear for the production of what is virtually a new book. Mr. Wilenski has always been an authority on French pictures, and no better book of its size exists than this. Wilenski is throughout a critic as well as art historian, and his opinions are to the fore ("Greuze, in my opinion, is a detestable artist"; or of Surrealism: "No French painters have contributed to this movement, which is to me most anti-pathetic"). He has a method of dealing deliberately with an artist's life under (a) and his art and technique (b), followed often by a list of characteristic pictures and the collections or museums they are in. The aesthetic story is tempered by a certain amount of human gossip. More than 200 plates, 12 of them in colour, illustrate the work.

One detailed story from Dutch painting comes with the study: *Rembrandt's Night Watch, its History and Adventures*, written by Ton Koot, the secretary of the Rijksmuseum. It deals with the recent cleaning and restoration to its original brilliance of this most famous of the master's works, shows us some enlarged details, and photographs of such items of evidence as the early copies of the work, including the one from the family album of Frans Banning Cocq dating from 1655. There are also photographs of the actual processes of the restoration. These photographs were chiefly made in the studio of the Rijksmuseum. Dealing with the subject of the picture, and the curious problems it raises, the author does nothing to solve these, and accepts the orthodox interpretation. He states categorically, for instance, that the escutcheon listing the names was not painted by Rembrandt, but this, surely, is still a moot point. The volume may be taken as a restatement of the orthodox ideas about the picture: ideas which are challenged elsewhere in this issue of APOLLO by the theories of Dr. Plesch.

Another fascinating story from Dutch art is told in a book on the Van Meegeren forgeries of Vermeer, de Hooch, Hals, and other Dutch masters, written by Dr. P. Coremans, the Director of the Central Laboratory of the Belgian Art Galleries, augmented by the evidence of the other experts who were called in

by the Dutch legal authorities scientifically to investigate the case. The book is in every way fascinating, and quite apart from its factual study, and its psychological picture of the case and the man, it tells us a great deal about modern methods of identification of Old Master paintings. From it emerges the wayward genius of this artist who deceived the art experts of the world in a spirit of anger at the refusal of the critics and public to recognise the value of his own creative work. The plates show in whole and in detail van Meegeren's false Vermeer paintings and his equally marvellous fakes of the other Dutch masters, then a number of his own water-colours and other works, and finally some of the laboratory infra-red photographs, and those of the other tests. It stands as a first-rate case book of a remarkable episode in the history of art.

Another excellent opportunity to study Dutch painting is afforded by *Camera Studies of Dutch Master Paintings* which Dr. van Schendel, Curator of the Rijksmuseum, has made. These studies are of details, and wisely the complete pictures from which they are taken are reproduced on a small scale in several pages at the end of the book. The scale of the main plates is often so large as to be above life-size so that we can study the method, the brushwork, the technical signature of the master concerned. The subjects chosen and the arrangement gives some striking comparisons. Dr. van Schendel's short introduction is a model of concise and informative writing which, nevertheless, does not lose grace.

A companion volume, equally exciting and valuable, deals with certain of the Viennese treasures of craftsmanship. In this instance the editing has been in the hands of Th. H. Lunsingh Scheurleer. Again the introduction, brief though it be, is excellently informative on the pieces chosen (albeit this is dealt with more exactly in the notes of description of the plates), and on the various techniques used. In both these volumes, however, the plates are the chief *raison d'être*, and the size, an elegant large quarto, gives the photographs their full value.

A final word on a curious volume issued by the Tate Gallery, an anthology of pictures in colour and more or less relevant passages from literature chosen by Carlos Peacock. I cannot quite see the point of this book as an official publication. It has a drawing-room table air. The colour reproductions are good (I surmise that the Tate's existing blocks have been used); the literature rather hit or miss. Blake's "Tiger, Tiger" for example, faces Stubbs' very tame version of that beast who is certainly not "burning bright" but rather pussy-cat-cum-hearthrug. Mr. Peacock's short introduction is charming; and I could understand this book as a fancy production of an ordinary publishing house. I don't feel that it is the Tate's business, exactly.

THE STORY OF ART. By E. H. Gombrich. Phaidon Press. 21s.

FRENCH PAINTING. By R. H. Wilenski. Medici Society. 35s.

REMBRANDT'S NIGHT WATCH, ITS HISTORY AND ADVENTURES. By Ton Koot. Cassell. 9s.

VAN MEEGEREN'S FAKED VERMEERS AND DE HOOCHS. By Dr. P. Coremans. Cassell. 25s.

CAMERA STUDIES OF DUTCH MASTER PAINTINGS. By Dr. A. van Schendel. Cassell. 30s.

CAMERA STUDIES OF EUROPEAN SCULPTURE AND CRAFTSMANSHIP. By Th. H. Lunsingh Scheurleer. Cassell. 30s.

PAINTERS AND WRITERS. By Carlos Peacock. Tate Gallery. Distributed by Phoenix House. 25s.

A Great Colourist

FRA ANGELICO. By Germain Bazin. (Heinemann and The Hyperion Press.) 36s.

"He was in the habit of saying that art demands much composure," Vasari wrote of Fra Angelico, and also that "in order to treat of the things of Christ, one must live with Christ." Profound and deeply satisfactory words which at once evoke the Christian humanist, temperate and devout, with a rooted enmity against all excesses of the soul which the Prior of St. Mark shared with Cosimo Medici, the representative prince of XVth century Florence. Monsieur Bazin asserts his belief that Fra Angelico was no ardent mystic like St. Catherine of Siena or St. Francis, no visionary and ecstatic saint, but one whose painting was to him an act of faith, a "vital orison," a natural devotion.

In his decisive and scholarly way, the writer of this volume, who is Curator of the Louvre Museum, clearly detaches Fra Angelico from the Giotto-Masaccio-Michelangelo line of volume- and space-creating expressionists and establishes his position as an artist who with Ghiberti sought after the function of line, the liveness of arabesque, and who, in his own right, created a new beauty and harmony of ethereal colours, the glorious half-tones of Byzantine origin, embracing lilac and rose, pale green and scarlet, azure and gold. As to spatial relationship, Angelico favoured arrangements not in depth and perspective, but, as in the Louvre "Coronation of the Virgin," he conceived in curves and semi-circles, "describing a great harmonious orb in space."

His bodies assume a spiritual transparency rather than physical density; they are transcended by light, they seem without weight, they soar, unmindful of the laws of gravitation.

He was, moreover, the first to manifest an intimate sentiment of nature; for in the background of the Cortona "Visitation," languishes a panorama of Lake Trasimeno, recognisable in its topographical shape and in the shining white light of midsummer. Monsieur Bazin credits the old master with a Corot-like sensibility for atmospheric values and for gradations of light and of tone which do service for perspective recession. In the jewel-like little panel of "The Martyrdom of SS. Cosmas and Damian" in the Louvre, of which there is an excellent colour-plate in the book, successive ranges of hillsides are defined by means of subtly graded colour and line, from rose and luminous russet to ochre and musty browns. This glorious little panel in its pristine freshness and elysian beauty, where the middle-distance is so curiously and naïvely partitioned off by five cypresses straight as candlesticks, lends to the scene of execution, steeped in much scarlet and gold, a rhythm of the utmost elegance and loveliness. So true is Mr. Berenson's dictum that Fra Angelico's sainthood prevented him from "perceiving evil anywhere" and that when he had to portray martyrdom "he became a mere child."

Fra Angelico, whom we knew as one of the world's greatest colourists and as a master of lineal design, appears in Monsieur Bazin's new valuation as one of the mainsprings of the classical spirit by the side of Vth century Greece and the cathedral sculpture of XIIIth century France. While he depicted the loftiest aspirations of the Christian soul, he also knew the expression of serenity and antique wisdom in the countenance of saints and sages, as in the monumental portrait heads of St. Mark and St. Thomas Aquinas by the side of the Crucifixion. "In that veritable Hellas which Tuscany was during the Quattrocento, Fra Angelico is Attic whereas Masaccio is Spartan."

F.M.G.

SALE ROOM NOTES & PRICES

BY BRICOLEUR

FEBRUARY is usually considered to be a gloomy month for dealers, and the past four weeks seem to have been no exception. On the other hand, now that it is possible to buy furnishing fabrics and attractive wallpapers—at a price—interior decorators still have plenty of work. Auction prices remain high.

PICTURES. In Christie's sale of 27th January a Lancret picture, "Ladies and Gentlemen with children in a garden," 24 in. by 30 in., brought 2,300 gns. It is recorded that this was in the collection of Thomas Wright, Esq., 1845. "The Magdalen," on panel, by the master of the demi-figure, made 105 gns.; and a pair of religious subjects, in the manner of Velasquez, 120 gns.; a Baptiste flowerpiece, 47½ in. by 35½ in., 85 gns.; a Dirk Langendyk canvas of a hawking party resting in a landscape, 58 gns.; "The Infant Saviour," by B. E. Murillo, made 70 gns.; and "The Card Players," by Benjamin Cuyp, signed, on panel, 30 gns. Modern pictures included a Duncan Grant, "A Girl playing a Mandolin," 48 in. by 23½ in., 6 gns.; a Sir John Lavery, "Norah," 9 gns.; and two pictures by C. Spencelagh, whose pictures at the Royal Academy Exhibitions always seem to be sold on the first day, "5.30 a.m.," 15½ in. by 11½ in., 30 gns.; and "Preparing the Yorkshire Pudding," 42 gns. A P. de Wint drawing of a cornfield, 6½ in. by 12½ in., made 42 gns.; and "Homewards," by Sir A. J. Munnings, 16 in. by 21 in., no less than 190 gns. An attractive drawing by Sir John Hayter, 1832, of a mother with her three daughters, in coloured chalk, made 14 gns.

Sotheby's sale of 1st February included the twelve flower paintings by Pieter Casteels, each representing a month and each with more than thirty types of flowers. These brought £3,700. An attractive Zoffany portrait of Col. Charles Brooke, of Sarawak, as a small boy, playing with the young Nawab of Murchdabad, made £320. A John Hoppner portrait of Sir Foster Cunliffe (1755-1834), who was himself a noted picture collector, made £360, and a Hoppner full-length portrait of Harriet Kinloch, painted in 1784, £160. Two companion portraits by F. Cotes, R.A., made good prices. One of Sir Robert Cunliffe, Bt., 49 in. by 39 in., and another of Mary Wright, made £520 and £800 respectively. The former was signed and dated 1768. A Robert Peake portrait of a military commander, in full suit of armour, dated 1593, 44½ in. by 35½ in., £220. A half-length portrait of a boy, attributed to Sir Joshua Reynolds, P.R.A., made 100 gns. An attractive Hobbema landscape of cottages in the dunes, on panel, 20½ in. by 26½ in., made £420. "A Canadian Autumn Scene," signed by C. Kriehoff, dated 1861, with another picture, "The Mail Boat crossing the St. Lawrence," both 8½ in. by 13 in., £170. A Jan Olis kitchen interior, with dead fowl, fruit and vegetables, £42; and a Roman street scene by M. Sweerts, "A young artist sketching a statue of Neptune," £140. In the sale of 8th February a portrait of Prince William of Orange by A. Cuyp made £1,250. Prince William, the father of William III, was aged thirteen years when this portrait was painted in 1638. A Velasquez bust portrait of a young man, in black dress and lace collar, brought £440. A Flemish winter

scene, by the master of the winter landscapes, which is reproduced in W. Bernt, *Die niederlandischen Maler des 17 Jahrh., III*, 1007, made £400.

At Robinson & Foster, "Shipping off a Jetty," by H. Koekkoek, 1864, made £52 10s. A view of a town in winter, by Anderson Lunby, £39 18s., and a picture of a Norwegian fjord by Morten Muller, £94 10s. A painting after Brueghel of a village on a river with boats and figures, £50 8s. In their sale on February 2nd, a picture of the Madonna and Child, after the now unfashionable Murillo, brought £35 14s. At Phillips, Son & Neale a landscape panel, Dutch school (unframed), made £40.

SILVER. Christie's sale of 1st February included a George I plain octagonal coffee pot by Anthony Nelme, 1720, which brought the excellent bid of 390 guineas. The gross weight was 27 oz. 18 dwt. A pair of Queen Anne table candlesticks, with baluster stems, by Simon Pantin, 1708, 39 oz. 16 dwt., made 125 gns.; and a pair of Charles II cylindrical flagons, 1661, maker's mark W.M., mullet below, gilt and chased at a later date, 183 oz. 10 dwt., 270 gns. A pair of George II table candlesticks, chased with cherubs' heads and scalework, were by the great Paul de Lamerie, and made 210 gns. The weight was 58 oz. 18 dwt. A circular dish by the same maker, 1730, engraved with the coat-of-arms at a later date, 10 oz. 17 dwt., 185 gns. An Irish large plain two-handled cup, with harp-shaped handles, by Robert Calderwood, Dublin, 1728, 44 oz. 4 dwt., 46 gns. Four silver-gilt oval sauce tureens and covers by Paul Storr, 1822, 160 oz., made 130 gns.; and a melon-shaped tea-kettle, stand and lamp, by the same maker, 81 oz. 7 dwt., 46 gns. A suite of seven XVIIIth century oval meat dishes, weighing 272 oz. 5 dwt., 145 gns. Table silver included a Victorian service of 102 pieces, 226 oz. 5 dwt., 125 gns., and a composite service of 47 pieces, 78 oz. 17 dwt., 34 gns. A lot amongst the foreign silver, from the Duke of Manchester's collection, aroused some interest. It was an Augsburg silver-gilt rose-water ewer and basin, circa 1610, probably by Tobias Kramer, 76 oz. 3 dwt., 95 gns.

Plated ware included four circular salt cellars, with spoons, 1835, 5 gns., a five-light candelabrum, on square base, 20 in. high, 7 gns.; and a reeded fiddle pattern table service of 43 pieces, with 138 other pieces of table plate, no more than 8 gns.

A set of six George III sauce tureens and covers by Robert Hennell, 1779, 121 oz. 12 dwt., made £125 at Sotheby's. In the same sale a set of four table candlesticks of 1766, 10 in. high, probably by Ebenezer Coker, £88. A set of four small salvers, 8½ in. diam., by John Crouch and Thomas Hannam, 1779, 52 oz. 2 dwt., £68. A good Queen Anne tankard by Timothy Ley, with plain cylindrical barrel, 1704, 22 oz. 4 dwt., £54; a later tankard, of 1730, with dome cover and scroll thumbpiece, by Fras. Spilsbury, 26 oz. 4 dwt., £40; and a tankard of 1799, with baluster body embossed at a later date, 30 oz. 14 dwt., £17. The Duke of Wellington sent twelve Victorian soup plates, engraved with the Wellesley crest, weighing 253 oz. 1 dwt., which brought £92. Thirty Queen's pattern table forks and thirty-five spoons to match, George III dates, 198 oz. 7 dwt., made £58; and an old English rat-tail table service of fifty-two pieces, 102 oz. 15 dwt., £44. A three-piece Georgian tea service, with chased melon-shaped bodies, by Emes & Barnard, 1828, with a pair of modern sugar nips, 54 oz. 13 dwt., £66. Plated ware included an octagonal tea urn, 16 in.

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A Sofa Table. Circa 1810.

high, and a pair of smaller urns, £62; a set of four oblong entrée dishes and covers, £24; a set of four wine coolers, of campana shape, with turn-over rims, £38.

Silver sold at Knight, Frank & Rutley included a George III oval teapot, by David and Robert Hennell, circa 1796, 18 oz. 10 dwt., £20; a plain Queen Anne sugar caster, by Simon Pantin, 6 oz. 18 dwt., £18; a modern coffee pot, of oval shape, 13 oz. 18 dwt., £12 10s.; and a plain salver with piecrust border, 12 in. diam., 30 oz. 2 dwt., £9. At Robinson & Foster's a George III tea set of three pieces, by William Kingdom, 1811, 36 oz., made £47; a George IV part table service of forks, spoons and ladles, 120 oz., £34. Two Queen Anne porringers, and a later XVIIIth century porringer, made £56 14s. In the same sale a silver and enamel miniature model of a Russian guardsman's helmet brought £33 12s. At Phillips, Son & Neale a George IV tea service, by John Bridges, gross weight 58 oz. 10 dwt., £100.

FURNITURE. At Christie's a set of Chippendale mahogany and rosewood chairs, twelve, and a settee, with interlaced splats and cabriole legs, made 300 gns. A Regency mahogany breakfront bookcase, with four glazed doors, 8 ft. wide, 140 gns., and a Sheraton mahogany bureau-cabinet, also with glazed doors and a fall front, 46 in. wide, 54 gns. An English oak Court cupboard, with the date 1674, 5 ft. 11 in. wide, made 46 gns., and a walnut cupboard, with panelled folding doors, on a stand of later date, 50 in. wide,

brought the same price. The latter piece is described and illustrated in *The Age of Oak* by Percy Macquoid, pp. 109-112. Six old English mahogany chairs and a pair of arm-chairs, with pierced splats and chamfered legs, made 100 gns., and a Queen Anne walnut bureau-cabinet, with glazed doors, inlaid with arrow-pattern bands, 40 in. wide, 115 gns. Small chests of drawers with folding tops, known as "bachelors' chests" for some obscure reason, always sell well. A walnut example, with two short and three long drawers, 36 in. wide, made 220 gns.

A set of eleven Scottish mahogany arm-chairs, of mid-XVIIIth century date, brought £340 at Sotheby's. These chairs were naïve in design, combining Gothic interlaced splats with the saddle-shaped seats and eagle-headed arm-handles of earlier fashion; and, not content with this medley of styles, the maker had enlivened the chamfered legs with Chinese fret brackets. A George II small mahogany writing table, of very rare form, the interior being fitted with a drop-in tray and various compartments, 31 in. wide, £78. Two Welsh oak dressers, with shelves, made £32 and £48 each. An Adam bergère upholstered in crimson damask and with a giltwood frame in the French taste, £52. A Regency mahogany pedestal writing table, in three parts, with two extra leaves, £120. On 10th February a good small English marquetry commode, also in the

French taste, with a fitted toilet drawer and measuring 39 in. wide, brought £340. An unusual George II mahogany secretaire cabinet, with a bookcase above and a kneehole writing drawer below, 8 ft. 5 in. high, £175. Small pieces of good quality furniture are bringing as high bids as they have ever done. A very small pair of Adam console tables in the same sale, 26 in. wide, with giltwood scroll frames and satinwood tops, made £135.

At Knight, Frank & Rutley a good George III mahogany breakfront secretaire bookcase, 6 ft. 3 in. wide (an unusually narrow measurement), made £840, and a set of twelve Chippendale reproduction mahogany chairs £130. The latter is an indication that although medium quality reproduction furniture has certainly fallen in value from the heights of two years ago, good quality pieces are maintaining their auction values. An XVIIIth century walnut display cabinet, with drawers below, made £70, a partners' walnut kneehole writing table, with leather top, 6 ft. wide, £182 10s.; a set of six Regency rosewood Trafalgar chairs, £52; and an early Victorian mahogany wardrobe, with sliding shelves, 5 ft. 9 in. wide, £34.

At Phillips, Son & Neale a Georgian mahogany breakfront bookcase, 8 ft. 6 in. wide, made £115; a mahogany Carlton House writing table, inlaid with satinwood lines and banded with kingwood, 4 ft. 6 in. wide, £50; and a Regency sewing or work table, in rosewood, on lyre-shaped supports, £68. A Sheraton mahogany half-round sideboard, with a cellaret, two drawers and two angle

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cupboards, 5 ft. 9 in. wide, made £81 18s. at Robinson & Foster's. In the same rooms a pair of Georgian knife-boxes, containing twenty-four knives and forks with agate handles, made £29 8s.; and a mahogany pedestal desk, 3 ft. 6 in. wide, £37 16s. At Rogers, Chapman & Thomas a small Georgian mahogany bureau made £28; a Queen Anne walnut lowboy chest, £49; and a dark oak dresser, 5 ft. wide, £40.

At Puttick & Simpson a XVIIth century Flemish ebonized cabinet of drawers, painted with mythological subjects, made £20, and a Sheraton mahogany bureau, 42 in. wide, £23.

At a country sale held at Tenbury Wells, by John Norton, a Queen Anne walnut chest of drawers, 3 ft. wide, made £60, a nest of walnut coffee tables, £35 10s., and an unusual Sheraton mahogany escritoire, inlaid with holly, £52.

SOFA TABLES. The fashion for the sofa table originated towards the close of the XVIIIth century, some forty or fifty years after the Pembroke table had been introduced. Sheraton gives a design for a sofa table in *The Drawing Book*, and, writing of them, says "they are those used before a sofa, and are generally made between 5 and 6 feet long, and from 22 inches to 2 feet broad." He adds that ladies "chiefly occupy them to draw, write or read upon." Although they show to best advantage when used for their original purpose of standing behind a sofa, supporting lamps and other necessities, they are now chiefly used as ladies' dressing-tables or as dining-tables in small rooms. For the latter purpose they are not really as convenient as the small breakfast tables with a centre support, but have the advantage of being narrower. The tops of sofa tables show only very slight variation; the most usual are with two real and two dummy drawers and the flaps with rounded corners. But in the treatment of the supports and the choice of woods there is a great variety. Some of the tables have supports at either end, whilst others are supported from the centre. The former are considered to be the more valuable.

The following is a list of sums bid for sofa tables within recent weeks. A mahogany sofa table, with satinwood bands and ebonised lines, on end-supports, 65 in. wide, 70 gns. A Regency rosewood table, banded with satinwood, on centre column, 58 in. wide, 42 gns. Another rosewood example, with brass stringing, on end-supports, 5 ft. wide, £50 8s. A mahogany sofa table, on reeded end-supports, 60 in. wide, £28; a Regency rosewood table, with brass corner mounts and brass claw feet, 5 ft. wide, £52; a Regency small rosewood table, crossbanded with satinwood, on end-supports, 35 in. wide, £68; a rosewood table with bands of inlaid brass decoration, on centre support, £44; a satinwood table, banded with tulipwood, on end-supports, 40 in. wide, £52; a mahogany table, of simple design and with a centre support, £36. A Regency calamander wood example, on 'H'-shaped end-supports, 3 ft. wide, made £80.

FRENCH FURNITURE. A Louis XV small marquetry writing table, or *bureau plat*, with one drawer with divisions for ink vases, only 18½ in. wide, made 145 gns. at Christie's. A Louis XVI commode, veneered in rosewood and mahogany, 33 in. wide, 40 gns., and a Louis XV marquetry encoignure, with shaped front, 30 in. wide, stamped "P. Perideiz, ME," 48 gns. A Louis XV marquetry table, with an oval top, a drawer in the frieze, and a kidney-shaped shelf below, 19½ in. wide, stamped "J. P. Dusautoy ME," 90 gns. Three Louis XV walnut chairs were stamped with the name "E. Campbell," and brought, with another chair signed "E. T. Nauroy, ME," 92 gns.

At Sotheby's an unusual French console table, entirely in ormolu, and with a heavy marble top, 36 in. wide, made £450, and a Louis XV marquetry coiffeuse, inlaid with floral bouquets on a tulipwood ground banded with kingwood, 2 ft. 9 in. wide, £200. Suites of Louis XVI giltwood furniture, even when covered with good contemporary tapestry, rarely sell well. Such a suite, with a sofa, eight armchairs and two stools, the Beauvais covers woven

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with fable and Child Gardener subjects, made £175. Some of the chairs bore an illegible signature, but possibly that of the Tiliard family.

At Phillips, Son & Neale a Louis XV kingwood commode with ormolu mounts made £52, and a Louis XV style salon suite of giltwood furniture, comprising a settee, a pair of fauteuils and six chairs, £100; and an early XIXth century vitrine, in the Louis XV taste, painted with Vernis Martin style panels, signed "Bellange," (circa 1840), and with a clock by "Chiout l'Aine" 7 ft. 3 in. high, £145. There have been other signs that early XIXth century French furniture imitating XVIIIth century designs is rising in value. A similar vitrine, but without painted decoration, made £35 at Knight, Frank & Rutley's, and a writing table of Louis XVI design, 6 ft. 4 in. wide, £50.

CHINESE WORKS OF ART. At Christie's a famille rose Mandarin jar and cover, decorated with flowering plants and landscapes, 49 in. high, Ch'ien Lung, made 64 gns.; a large pale green jade figure of Kuan Yin, 16½ in. high, 145 gns.; a pale green carved jade vase, of pilgrim bottle form, 7½ in. high, 80 gns.; a XVIIIth century pale green jade finger citron, 8½ in. long, 44 gns.; and three *sang-de-bœuf* vases, 22 in. and 23 in. high, 34 gns. A pair of Ch'ien Lung cocks, on pierced rockwork bases, in red and brown, 36 gns. Part of a famille rose armorial dinner service, of forty pieces, made 78 gns. These were painted with the arms of Nicholas Fazackerley, who was M.P. for Preston in 1732. At Puttick & Simpson's a set of five Ch'ien Lung circular dishes, enamelled with flower sprays on a pink ground, made £42; and at Phillips, Son & Neale a pair of Chinese seated figures, painted with flowers and dragons, 12 in. high, £54.

A fine set of ivory chessmen in red and white, carved as a European king and queen and the pawns as European soldiers, made £28 at Sotheby's. An Imperial porcelain table screen, painted in famille rose colours with European figures and landscapes, 22 in. high, Ch'ien Lung, £48; and a part dinner-service of sixty-nine pieces, in *Compagnie des Indes* style, £180. A Shang dynasty bronze *Chüeh*, with silvery patination, on three typical pointed feet, 7½ in., brought £44; and a bronze inscribed Kuei of the Chou dynasty, 11½ in. diam., £34.

MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS. As stated in our previous issue, we reprint the letters which were sold with the Tisseran harpsichord at Sotheby's in December.

(1) Tho. Day, (London), June 10, 1712, to Mr. Edw. (Hanford) Woollas) . . .

"I have been this morning to see another harpsichord: it is of Player's making, with split or quarter notes like Mrs. Stratford's . . . the upper sets of keys is an Echo, very soft and in my opinion a little snaffing; but the other sett has two Unisons like Mrs. Stratford's belonging to it, but a more noble sound. The man asks 30 guineas; I believe that the Excellent Harpsichord of 45 guineas will come at 40 if not for 40 lb. It is handsomely vernish'd, with mixt gold and black, and must have a leather cover which will come to 24 sh: the first I mention'd is plain without and has a leather cover to it, tho' not very handsome. . . . The Harpsichord I saw to-day has the full compass that Mrs. Stratford's has above; a long Octave to F below. The other Harpsichord is just of the same compass as hers but of a sound and make that is beyond exception . . . I do not find any difference between it and those that cost 80 and 100 guineas"

(2) Th. Day (London) Aug. 23, 1712 to Mr. Ed. Hanford (Woollas)

"I sent you word when I went to Mrs. Hanford that I had bought you a Harpsichord . . . I saw it safely put in the wagon. . . You will be pleased to send a cart for it to Pershore, and that, before the wagon can be there, for fear there should not be due care taken in unloading it; for it is heavy and requires strong hands as well as care. When you have got it into the room you design for it, and taken off the cover and Cross Bars that are within the case, you will lay it down as softly as can be, with the open side of the case downwards, and then take up the case from the Harpsichord. Among the shavings you will find the stick and key tied to it . . . I fear one of the nails has razed the leather cover . . . The pins are tied with Packthread, but I hope to have an occasion to send you some satten lacing for that purpose . . . The lid of the Harpsichord opens in two places; the first will do best for your usual Practice because the more you open it the sooner it will be out of tune. I hope you design to keep it in the grey room, that being as I take it the dryest. . . . There are three Setts of Strings, which may be played on either all together, or every one by itself. One Set is an Octave to the other two. all together are only a thorough-bass to a Consort: for Lessons, any two sets of the three are more proper.

. . . If any Jack does not speak it is commonly by reason of the pen (i.e. quill) hanging on the string; and the way is not to beat the key or shave the Jack, but take your pen-knife and scrape the under-side of the pen towards the point as lightly as ever you can; then smooth it with three or four strokes of your pen-knife haft. And if any Jack should not slip down, never shave it, but thrust it up and down, and at the most scrape it gently".

BYGONES. The late Francis Bussell gathered together, in his house near Sevenoaks, an immense collection of rare and interesting bygones. Tobacco jars, kitchen and hearth utensils, old trade signs (great pewter scissors from barbers' shops, a life-sized wooden figure of an unfortunate boy chimney-sweeper, sooty black and grasping a brush in his hand, wrought-iron keys, 22 in. high, from watchmakers' shops, etc.), ginger-bread and other moulds, stay busks, tallies, measures and a hundred other sorts of antiquated but once familiar objects are grouped under the heading of bygones. The sale of the first portion of the collection at Sotheby's on 20th January caught the interest of the B.B.C. as well as of the press. A lot containing some twenty lead, iron and pewter tobacco jars made £20, and another lot containing a similar number, £11. A collection of ten pottery tobacco jars, two formed as Oriental heads and one as an outsize pipe, £13. An iron chimney crane, a smoke jack with revolving spit, a pot hook for use with the crane, and a clockwork bottle jack, £17. A strange iron scold's bridle, in the form of a grotesque head with donkey's ears, surmounted by a bell and fastened with a padlock, £17. An unusual Stuart brass warming pan, inscribed "Who burn the bed Nobody, 1645," of which there is a similar example in the British Museum, £18. Three late XVIIIth century trade signs were bought by the Horniman Museum for £17. A chimney-sweep's sign, an iron violin from a musical instrument maker's shop, and another, made £25. A collection of five XVIIth and XVIIIth century fire marks brought £19.

Among the treen was a lot comprising a milking piggan, a harvest keg or costrel, a flour bin, and two iron-bound pails, £21. A similar keg and flour bin is illustrated by Mr. E. H. Pinto in *Treen or Small Wood Ware*. Five measures, one 19½ in. high, bearing the excise mark of Coventry, made £17 10s. Eleven tip-staves made £20, and seven carved wood nutcrackers, of various types, £11. A penny farthing bicycle brought £12, and a "bone shaker," of 1869, £11.

One lot amongst the kitchen utensils included a lemon-squeezer which could be happily copied. Of turned pear-wood, it had a spout at one end and a screw press at the other, and was evidently intended to be passed round at table.



CARVED OAK CABINET

K.P. (Braintree). A number of cupboards of the same type were made during the mid-XIXth century, as can be seen from the catalogue of the Great Exhibition of 1851. Many were decorated with applied carvings in the style of Grinling Gibbons (1648-1720), and in some cases it appears that old pieces of carving were used. The decoration on your own cabinet is certainly in Gibbons' manner, and it is possible that it may be from the hand of W. G. Rogers, who was born at Dover in 1792 and, in addition to carrying out repairs to Gibbons' work, also carved trophies and swags in late XVIIth century style. A panel of Rogers' carving, a group of dead game, lace and ribbons, was included in a London auction sale recently. It was signed with the carver's initials, and brought less than £10.



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